

# **An Evaluation of United World Colleges**

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## Abstract

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This evaluation of United World Colleges (UWC) explored the relationships between the movement's aims and the processes and outcomes of learning in the colleges. The purpose of the evaluation was to establish how effective the colleges were in meeting their aims and the factors that defined their effectiveness.

The research focused on the perspectives of UWC students, graduates and staff in eight of the nine<sup>1</sup> UWCs internationally. Semi-structured interviews provided the main source of evidence in the first phase of data collection, supplemented by student journals, informal observations and documentary evidence. The second phase of data collection comprised a large-scale postal questionnaire of UWC students to check the validity of initial findings amongst a larger sample.

The evaluation established that UWCs were effective in meeting their aims, especially in relation to citizenship education. However, while it was apparent that the formal curriculum was an important and often underestimated factor of influence, it became clear that informal learning experiences were more influential. These experiences were related to the way in which individuals interacted with day-to-day activities and with one another and hence much of what could be understood about the effectiveness of UWCs appeared to be rooted in how the colleges functioned as communities.

By exploring the cultural norms that governed communal behaviour, it was possible to identify certain values and beliefs shared within and between UWCs. These values and beliefs could be traced back to the movement's founding principles and appeared to be the essence of its culture, providing the learning experiences encountered in its colleges with meaning and potency.

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<sup>1</sup> A tenth college opened after the period of data collection.

## Acknowledgements

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## List of abbreviations and terminology used

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### Abbreviations

UWC	United World Colleges (the movement or a single college)
UWCs	United World Colleges (the colleges)
AC	United World College of the Atlantic
AD	United World College of the Adriatic
AW	Armand Hammer United World College of the American West
LPC	Li Po Chun United World College of Hong Kong
PC	Lester B. Pearson United World College of the Pacific
RCN	Red Cross Nordic United World College
SB	Simon Bolivar United World College of Agriculture
SEA	United World College of South East Asia
WK	Waterford KaMhlaba United World College of Southern Africa
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspectorate
IB	International Baccalaureate
CAS	Creativity, Action, Service
Q. Item	Current Student Questionnaire Item
ISA	The International Schools Association
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

### Terminology

College	All two year UWCs and the IB years of SEA and WK
Head	The Head, Principal, Rektor or President of each UWC
First/second year	First or second year of study for the IB
Boarder	A student resident on campus
Day student	A student not resident on campus
Scholar	A student awardee of a full or partial scholarship
Fee-payer	A student paying full college fees
Host Family	A family in the local community with whom a student spends time (some UWCs refer to as 'Get Away Family', 'Link Family' or 'Link Parents')

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# Introduction

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## **The aim of the research**

The aim of this research was to study the processes and impacts of learning in eight United World Colleges from the perspectives of the movement's<sup>1</sup> members, especially those of its students and graduates. Emphasis was placed on the contribution its findings could make towards recognising UWC's achievements and towards developing and empowering its administration, its colleges and its individual members to be more effective.

## **The background to the thesis**

In 1994, United World Colleges (UWC) requested that the Institute of Education, University of London conduct the first full-scale evaluation of its educational activities and their influence upon its students and graduates. Funded by a private foundation, the evaluation commenced in February 1995. Its research officer - the author of this thesis - worked under the supervision of Professor Denis Lawton throughout the project's twenty-nine month duration and during the subsequent period set aside for the completion of this thesis.

The thesis presented here grew out of the evaluation conducted for UWC and the empirical data referred to in the chapters that follow was collected in the course of this funded research. However work on this thesis has provided the opportunity to analyse and present the data in more depth and detail than was possible within the practical constraints of the evaluation and its report. In particular, this thesis provides more substantial discussion of citizenship education, service learning, and informal learning experiences. Other findings are presented for the first time. For example, the findings presented in Chapter Seven illustrate how analysis of the norms governing everyday behaviour in UWCs provided access to the shared beliefs and values at the deepest level of the movement's culture.

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<sup>1</sup> UWC requested that the evaluation report and this thesis refer to their colleges, network, and administration as a 'movement'

## The colleges

United World Colleges (International) Limited is a registered company with UK charitable status. At the time of this evaluation, it included nine colleges<sup>2</sup> located internationally, most of which educated 16-18 year olds. Two of these colleges varied from this model in that they also admitted students from the age of eleven to their lower schools and one college ran a three-year, post-secondary programme of education for 18-21 year olds.

The stated aim of the colleges was to '*foster international understanding, peace and justice*' (UWC Review 96/97: 2) and for this purpose, students and staff were selected to provide each college with a broad diversity of nationalities. Each of the eight colleges involved in this evaluation had adopted the International Baccalaureate (IB) as the curriculum for post-16 education. Most of the colleges were fully residential and admitted students on a full or partial scholarship basis.

The UWC movement, its organisation and evolution are reviewed in detail in Chapter Two of this thesis.

## Previous research on UWCs

Previous research involving UWCs has either focused on a specific feature of the colleges, such as the IB Programme (Ford 1985; Hill 1993), community service (Richards 1992), and charismatic leaders (McMahon 1993), or has become sufficiently outdated to be useful only for historical purposes (Leach 1969; Shekleton 1978). Samaranayake (1991), a UWC graduate, considered the contemporary movement in broader terms by conducting a non-empirical study of UWC's aims and policies from an insider's perspective. However, the research most pertinent to this evaluation examined the character of international schools and international education (Waterson and Hayden 1999; Hayden and Wong 1997; Hayden and Thompson 1995, 1997; Matthews 1988, 1989; Sanderson 1981).

Although each of these studies informed this evaluation and will be referred to in the body of this thesis, investigation concerning what has been called '*ideology-driven*'<sup>3</sup> international education appeared to be at a relatively immature stage:

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<sup>2</sup> A tenth college, The Mahindra UWC of India, opened after the evaluation's period of data collection

<sup>3</sup> Matthews 1988: 12

Whether evidence exists of the effectiveness of international schools in the development of “international values”, however, is debatable. Although anecdotal evidence to this effect is often quoted, there is dearth of systematically gathered data which would enable firm conclusions to be drawn. (Waterson and Hayden 1999: 23)

This evaluation offered a significant opportunity to explore and describe this phenomenon in the UWC context and to support the development of a theory-base in this field.

### **Readers’ guide to the thesis**

Data collection for this evaluation occurred in each of the movement’s colleges with the exception of one<sup>4</sup>; however, the purpose and practical constraints of this evaluation determined that its data would not be presented as individual profiles of the colleges. Instead, the evaluation’s findings are presented in this thesis, as they were in the report to UWC, in a manner that considers the aims, practice and achievements of the movement as a whole.

Discussion in Chapter One of this thesis focuses on how the evaluation was conducted and the methodological and epistemological issues it raised. Chapter Two provides an overview of the movement’s evolution by considering its structural expansion and how the movement’s modern day *raison d’être*, philosophy and aims had developed from its founding principles. This discussion is used to contextualise and inform subsequent consideration of the research findings relating to the contemporary movement.

The criteria and processes of student selection are analysed in Chapter Three and their implications for the composition of the student populations in the colleges are commented upon. Chapters Four and Five examine the research findings concerning students’ learning experiences in each of the eight UWCs involved in this evaluation. Chapter Four considers the role of an academic programme in international education by exploring academic learning in the colleges in relation to UWC’s aims and to its significance for the movement’s students and graduates. Chapter Five builds on

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<sup>4</sup> One college did not participate in the evaluation due to the financial and administrative problems it was encountering during the period of data collection

Chapter Four by examining learning related to the non-academic components of the IB and the informal influences of college life.

The movement's graduates and their lives after their UWC education are the focus of Chapter Six. Discussion centres on the relationships that graduates identified between their UWC learning experiences and their life styles and life choices. Chapter Seven examines why it was, as students and graduates perceived, the informal influences in college life that had most impact on learning in relation to the movement's aims. In doing so, it considers the power of UWC's culture. The thesis concludes by looking at the main findings of the evaluation in the light of what the study set out to achieve and in terms of their implications for the study of education and its practice.

### **The definition of certain terms**

The reader should note that terms such as 'citizenship' and 'international understanding' are explored in relation to the data rather than defined in advance. More thorough consideration of these terms, especially conceptually, is deliberately reserved until Chapters Seven and Eight as they were found to encapsulate fundamental beliefs and assumptions that underpin the UWC enterprise and constitute the core of what will be referred to as the culture of UWC.

## Chapter One

# The Research Design and Methodology

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The UWC evaluation is considered from three perspectives in this chapter - what it was intended to achieve, how it was conducted, and the methodological and epistemological issues it raised. The chapter begins with an explanation of the purpose of the evaluation and the rationale underpinning the research approach. Then the delimitations of the research and its significance for certain audiences are established, before the procedures involved in sampling and negotiating access to the institutions and individuals involved in the study are described. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the instruments and stages of data collection and analysis and with some reflection upon appropriate and effective methods for this type of investigation.

### The purpose of the evaluation

As is the case in most evaluation research, the purpose of this study was broadly defined by those commissioning it and, as a consequence, was characterised by practical and context-specific requirements. More than three decades of personal and financial investment in the UWC concept and the need for more investment in its future has inevitably prompted questions about the results of this educational venture. This evaluation was initiated by the out-going Director General of UWC with the intention of identifying '*hard evidence of what UWC is achieving*'<sup>1</sup>.

After a number of preliminary meetings between the Institute of Education, various UWC personnel and college heads, it was agreed that the utility of the evaluation would be enhanced considerably by examining not only *what* UWCs were achieving, but also *how* they were doing so, in order that the research findings could also provide insights to inform and improve practice. Consequently this research was defined as a preliminary evaluation of UWC learning experiences and their outcomes in both the short and the long term, particularly, but not exclusively, in the light of the

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<sup>1</sup> Recorded discussion with Former Director General of UWC, March 1995



movement's philosophy and aims. Its purpose was not to inspect or 'league-table' UWCs, but to understand, justify and develop their aims, practice and achievements.

### **The rationale for the research approach**

Evaluation of the type proposed for this research task is rooted in ideas originating from a shift in evaluation theory and practice in the late 1960s. Stake's (1967) '*Countenance Model*' and Parlett and Hamilton's (1972) proposal that evaluations should '*illuminate*', grew out of concern about the theoretical, practical and value implications of evaluations that focused solely on measures of outcome. The subsequent growth in evaluation practice directed at understanding the processes of education, as well as examining its outcomes, was a response to these concerns and reflected the growing currency of ideas concerning the importance of studying social phenomena holistically, taking into account not only their complexity and particularity, but the role that humans play in their construction.

Case study, the research approach adopted for this investigation of UWC education, grew out of this shift in thinking and became a strategy for focusing on the uniqueness of institutional settings (Harland 1996). Commonly defined as '*an enquiry around an instance*' (Adelman *et al.* 1983: 2), case study is a research design that can accommodate a variety of disciplinary and philosophical perspectives. The way in which it was used for this research arose from various theoretical assumptions, as well as certain practical and value considerations.

### ***Theoretical assumptions***

The approach taken towards this evaluation was oriented by a number of assumptions concerning social reality and certain ideas concerning the origins of knowledge, the logic of inquiry and the purpose of research. It drew on a worldview, which postulates that '*reality is socially constructed through individual or collective definitions of the situation*' (Firestone 1987: 16) rather than a single, objective entity that imposes itself upon individuals. From this perspective, therefore, the assumption is made that social phenomena cannot be observed externally and measured in the form of discrete and manipulable variables, but that they can only be understood from the various perspectives of those directly involved in the social context concerned.

Given this philosophical orientation, it was proposed that UWC educational processes and outcomes should be considered from the inside, in particular, by gaining access to the sense that UWC students and graduates make of their college and post-college experiences. It was agreed that this task could be achieved most effectively by minimising the distance between the researcher and the researched and by adopting a very loose agenda for initial interaction. The intention was to evaluate UWC education from a qualitative perspective by looking at it through ‘*a wide lens*’ (Brannen 1992: 4) in its natural settings and by using first-hand accounts to produce ‘*thick descriptions*’ of learning processes and outcomes as experienced (Miles and Huberman 1994: 10). In doing so, the evaluation was designed to explore the patterns and interrelationships between the *what* and *how* of UWC learning, while remaining sensitive to its complexity, relativity and ‘embeddedness’.

### ***Practical considerations***

There were also a number of practical considerations that oriented the way in which the research task was conceived. In most instances these considerations arose from the limitations of the evaluation’s duration and resources and from the geographical difficulties of gaining access to sources of data.

Although it had been anticipated that the evaluation’s fieldwork would involve only a sample of the movement’s colleges, UWC college heads felt the direct involvement of all UWCs was required if the research findings were to have movement-wide relevance. The implications of fieldwork on this scale, given the time and resources allocated to the study, dictated to a large degree what was necessary and feasible methodologically.

A single fieldwork visit of approximately seven days<sup>2</sup> to each UWC provided the only face-to-face interaction possible between the researcher and current and former members of UWC communities outside the United Kingdom. These restrictions, as well as the merits of methodological triangulation<sup>3</sup>, directed the evaluation towards a methodologically eclectic approach, which was designed to include as many

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<sup>2</sup> The researcher spent sixteen days in Waterford KaMhlabha UWC and made two additional visits to the UWC of the Atlantic for familiarisation and piloting purposes

<sup>3</sup> Denzin (1970)

perspectives as possible and to capture more than a ‘snapshot’ of UWC learning experiences.

From a practical perspective, the state of research databases on international education and school effectiveness also influenced the research approach employed in this evaluation. As discussion in Chapter Two will establish there has been a paucity of empirical research concerning the nature and influence of international education. Most discussion in this field has referred to various notions of the ‘true’ international school and easily observed characteristics such as student intake, staffing, and the choice of formal curricula. As a result, problematic assumptions and categorisations have been applied to schools and their educational programmes. By seeking *insiders’* perspectives of UWC, my intention was to dig beneath surface characteristics to provide new, and perhaps more meaningful, insights into this form of international education.

Since the research of Rutter *et al.* in 1979, the connection between school culture and learning has commonly been accepted. However, despite the fact that a number of studies in subsequent years have affirmed this relationship (e.g. Purkey and Smith 1982; Deal 1985), most investigations of school effectiveness have marginalised or overlooked the roles that culture plays in the learning environment. These circumstances confirmed the need for a study of this kind to consider both the formal and informal features of UWC education.

### ***Value considerations***

The aim of evaluative case study is not only to describe and explain the phenomenon studied, but also to make judgements about its worth (Merriam 1988). As a consequence, this investigation, like other evaluative research, operated within an extremely sensitive arena, which was made apparent by, for example, the frequency with which questions were asked concerning who would have control over the investigation, who would have access to its data, and in what manner the evaluation’s findings would be presented and to whom.

Opinions have differed amongst evaluation theorists on the subject of whose questions an evaluation should answer and at whom its findings should be directed. Patton (1978), for example, focused on the decision-makers within the study context, while

Guba and Lincoln (1985) argued that it was the evaluator's responsibility to identify and serve all possible audiences or '*stakeholders*'.

In line with this evaluation's philosophical orientation, Guba and Lincoln's notion of democratically responsive evaluation underpinned the research approach. The evaluation was designed to consider the issues raised by all of those directly involved with UWC education, not just those raised by the individuals who had commissioned the investigation, and its data was presented for the main part in a rich narrative form which made it accessible to a wide range of audiences. However, the '*naivety*' of the idea that an evaluator can respond directly to all stakeholders' needs and expectations was very clear in this evaluation context (Norris 1990: 52).

Various obstacles were encountered in the process of attempting to establish this type of interaction. Perhaps the most enduring and challenging obstacle in this respect was the fact that the evaluation operated within the movement's established power structures and systems of interaction. UWC's essentially hierarchical organisation and the presence of some long-standing tensions amongst factions of the movement concerning status and power prompted a wary response to an evaluation commissioned by UWC's administration and presented as a '*fait accompli*' to the rest of the movement.

Mindful of this wariness and of the way in which an evaluator's '*selection of roles, goals, audiences, issues and techniques... provides clues to [her] political allegiance*' (MacDonald 1976b: 132), wherever possible the purpose and operation of the evaluation were made clear in order to allay doubts about the evaluation's agenda. To this end, the following terms were communicated and actively demonstrated to UWC staff, students and graduates:

- i) the evaluation's purpose was not to make harmful comparisons between the colleges, rather it was '*one of data gathering that leads to decision-making, not trouble-making*' (Stake 1967: 525);
- ii) the criteria for evaluation success were internal, not only in the form of the movement's aims, but also in the form of the relevance and meaningfulness of the educational experience for its participants;

- iii) only individuals who had given their fully informed consent participated in the evaluation and the right to choose not to participate was respected;
- iv) all data was handled confidentially and presented anonymously<sup>4</sup>;
- v) wherever possible my interpretations of data were verified and negotiated with the relevant research participants.

However, the practical realities of the evaluation context, as well as the requirements, expectations and sensitivities of those commissioning and negotiating the research, restricted the degree to which the processes of its investigation could be wholly democratised. For example, fears concerning the potential threat that the evaluation's findings might pose for marketing the UWC concept competed with a genuine desire to use its findings to develop the theory and practice of UWC education. These tensions made UWC's administration reluctant to specify terms for the dissemination of the evaluation's findings prior to their submission. As a consequence research participants' 'right to know', which MacDonald (*op.cit.*: 134) proposed as '*the key justificatory concept*' for democratic evaluation, could not be assured at the time that their cooperation was enlisted. Other issues of control, such as the decision to deny data collection concerning UWC's Executive and International Boards and the expectation that the researcher, in the role of expert, should produce recommendations on the basis of the evaluation's findings, also had implications for the nature of the evaluation.

### **The scope and boundaries of the evaluation**

Given the very limited knowledge base concerning the processes and outcomes of UWC learning in existence prior to this evaluation, predetermining specific parameters or agendas for investigation would have been problematic. For example, a study of UWC learning which sought only evidence of the impact of the formal curriculum would be assuming that the learning environment functioned on a predictable means-end basis and would be likely to overlook the many varied and often hidden influences upon, and outcomes of, learning (Bell 1988: 5). Therefore, in order to develop comprehensive and credible pictures of UWC learning, restrictions upon the parameters of the evaluation were avoided wherever possible and investigation began with a very open agenda.

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<sup>4</sup> College heads and certain movement personnel agreed that it would be impossible to maintain their anonymity and consented to being identified in the evaluation's report and this thesis

To this end, case study was considered the most appropriate means of investigation as it made it possible i) to explore a form of education which has no single set of outcomes, ii) to describe UWC learning experiences and outcomes without overlooking the influence of their social and physical context, and iii) to '*explain the causal links in real-life interventions that are too complex for the survey of experimental findings*' (Yin 1984: 25). But whilst an exploratory, inductive and holistic approach was considered appropriate, certain boundaries had to be set in the process of defining and negotiating the *case* to be studied, not least to avoid the investigation becoming unwieldy and unproductive.

Following Miles and Huberman's (1994: 25) suggestions, a case was thought of as '*a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context*'. In this particular study, the *phenomenon* or *focus* was defined as UWC learning experiences and their outcomes as reported at the time of data collection, and the *bounded context* was thought of as what is still believed to be a relatively small group of schools which pursue ideologically oriented international education (Sanderson 1981; Matthews 1989a). The evaluation's funding circumstances defined the phenomenon for study further by dictating a focus upon the education of the student age group common to all UWCs (fifteen years plus) and by precluding any empirical investigation of international education outside the UWC movement.

Given the exploratory nature of the evaluation, sources of evidence and specific samples for data collection needed to evolve and be refined as fieldwork progressed. Therefore, in order to facilitate this approach, unrestricted access to sources of data within the movement was requested. Once the purpose and integrity of the research had been established, this request was only denied with respect to data sources concerning UWC's International and Executive Boards. The college communities, groups and individuals that were ultimately involved in this evaluation were thought of as '*subcases*' or '*subsets*'<sup>5</sup> embedded within the boundaries of the case study.

Some areas of investigation were neither within the remit nor the scope of this evaluation. For example, it was made clear from the outset that this research would not

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<sup>5</sup> Yin (1984)

constitute an evaluation of the International Baccalaureate (the formal curriculum in all the UWCs studied). However, as the study evolved, more difficult decisions had to be made about its boundaries. These decisions were influenced most by the practical restrictions of time, accessibility and resources. Avenues meriting further investigation were often ranked according to their relevance and apparent importance to the purpose of the study, in order to make decisions about which to pursue as part of this study and which to recommend for future research. In this way, for example, certain issues concerning student selection were set aside and a review of learning materials, such as books and audio-visual resources, was considered to be outside the scope of this particular evaluation.

### **Sources of evidence**

For the reasons previously discussed, as wide a variety of perspectives on UWC learning as possible were sought in the course of this evaluation. To this end all sources of evidence within the UWC context were considered potentially useful and a range of research techniques was employed to gather and compare accounts of UWC learning with one another and with my observations and items of documentary evidence.

While this approach produced a large data set that included information from sources such as a college governor, UWC administrative personnel, student selectors, a college counsellor, all college heads and a wide range of teaching staff, the quest for ‘insiders’ perspectives’ on UWC learning and its outcomes directed the largest proportion of the evaluation’s time and resources to those with first-hand experience: the movement’s students and graduates.

As Appendix X details, data was gathered from 739 UWC students and 60 UWC graduates in roughly equal proportions from each of the eight colleges involved in the evaluation. However, it is important to bear in mind when considering the evaluation’s findings that:

- i) Red Cross Nordic UWC student sample figures were halved for each method of data collection, because, as a new college, it had only one cohort of students in 1995;

- ii) Waterford KaMhlaba UWC student questionnaire returns were at least 21% lower than the returns from any other college (92-100% return rate);
- iii) no interviews were conducted with Pearson UWC [PC] students or teachers and no observations were made of college life at PC as it was requested that the research visit to this college should occur outside its academic year to coincide with its Twenty Year Graduate Reunion. For the same reason, the evaluation's sample of graduates was skewed towards proportionally higher numbers of PC graduates from the reunion's graduating years (Appendix X, 2a);
- iv) Simon Bolivar UWC did not participate in the evaluation due to serious financial and administrative problems at the college during the period of data collection.

### **Negotiating the involvement of research participants**

Although, in theory, access to the movement's institutions was pre-established by the fact that UWC had commissioned the evaluation, the ethical integrity of the investigation and the quality of the data it gathered were dependent upon establishing the informed consent and the willing involvement of each participant. This process began with a meeting between myself (as researcher), eight college heads and various administrative personnel in March 1995.

The meeting served to establish confidence in the integrity of the research and a sense of collaboration, which set the tone for the remainder of the evaluation. Heads of colleges were asked to convey to their college communities what the meeting had established about the evaluation's purpose and rationale, the roles and requirements of those involved, the researcher, the means of data collection, and the issues of voluntary involvement, confidentiality and anonymity.

College heads, the UWC London Office and other research participants also assisted with the task of encouraging and informing the involvement of UWC graduates and student selectors. I supported this input by distributing informative posters, flyers and



letters to college communities prior to my fieldwork visits and to other prospective participants when their involvement in the evaluation was requested.

Although the geography of the movement's colleges allowed a preliminary visit to the UWC in Wales only, members of each college community were invited to contact me with queries or opinions concerning the proposals for the evaluation. 'Electronic Mail' proved particularly useful for this purpose and was, in fact, used extensively for communication with research participants throughout the evaluation.

In addition to this initial contact, a further explanation of the evaluation's purpose, personnel, funding, procedures and ethical parameters was provided for all prospective participants prior to any specific data collection. Data collection proceeded only when their willing involvement had been established.

### **Data collection techniques**

Like most contemporary evaluations and case study research, this investigation displayed a '*catholicity*' in the choice of data collection techniques that crossed the traditional qualitative/quantitative divide (Harland 1996: 103). This eclecticism arose from the pragmatic demands of gathering the types and the amount of data required and the recognised merits of methodological triangulation, but it did not constitute an ontological or epistemological shift. Rather, by incorporating a single research instrument (the Current Student Questionnaire) commonly associated with quantitative research in an investigation firmly rooted in the theoretical assumptions and practices often identified with the qualitative research paradigm, the evaluation effectively demonstrated the point made by Brannen (1992: 15) and others that '*there is no necessary or one-to-one correspondence between epistemology and methods*'. In fact, as subsequent discussion in this chapter will demonstrate, the way in which, and the point at which, the questionnaire was used in this research was in line with the theoretical underpinnings of the evaluation and complementary to the other means of data collection employed.

Six methods of data collection were used in Phase One of evaluation and one method was used in Phase Two:

**Phase One** (June 1995 - April 1996)

- individual semi-structured interviews with students, graduates, heads, teachers, and student selectors (Appendix XI, 1-5);
- group interviews with students and graduates (guided by the use of a Visual Representation Sheet - Appendix XI, 6);
- student journals completed over a ten-week period (Appendix XI, 7);
- informal observations of college activities, selection interviews/meetings;
- primary and secondary sources of documentary evidence (e.g. movement and college promotional material, written histories, application forms, statements of philosophy, aims, mission and policy);
- informal recorded discussions with certain UWC personnel

**Phase Two** (April 1996)

- a postal questionnaire for students (Appendix XI, 8).

**The choice and development of the research instruments**

The choice of each research instrument was determined by the thinking underpinning the overall research approach, the instrument's role in the light of the purpose of the evaluation, and the recognised strengths and weaknesses of each method of data collection, particularly given that fieldwork had to be condensed into short periods of time. However, the instruments used in Phase One were also developed and revised in the light of the preliminary communication between myself and the UWC movement, an initial review of related research, instrument piloting in AC and WK, and material documenting UWC's development.

All of this pre-fieldwork data was recorded and used to inform the direction of the evaluation in its initial stages. For example, evidence in these records that many UWC students, graduates and staff placed considerable emphasis on the '*right*' kind of student for the UWC experience directed some of the evaluation's resources towards investigating student selection criteria and procedures, and my informal observations

of the merits of group discussion with students resulted in the development of the 'group interview' as a research instrument.

The student questionnaire used in Phase Two was developed and revised largely on the basis of the initial analysis of data collected in Phase One and piloting in AC<sup>6</sup>. While the instruments used in Phase One were designed to gain access to first-hand perceptions of the UWC learning experience and its outcomes, the questionnaire constituted a simple counting device designed to enhance the validity and generalisability of the evaluation's findings.

Data collection was divided into two phases to provide an opportunity to identify the key themes and issues arising from initial analysis of data gathered by the exploratory techniques employed in Phase One and to devise a postal questionnaire to check the relevance of these themes and issues for the experiences of a larger body of UWC students.

### **Phase One: Interviews**

Direct interaction in the form of individual or group interviews was considered to be the most appropriate method of data collection as it provided the best opportunities to get physically and psychologically close to UWC learning experiences. By these means, the aim was to enter the interviewee's perspective and gain access to unobservable phenomena such as feelings, thoughts, and intentions, as well as events that were either in the past or precluded the researcher's presence in another way (Patton 1980).

Between June 1995 and April 1996, individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with sixty-five UWC students, sixty graduates, eight college heads (plus one former head), thirty-five teachers, and seven student selectors. In the same period, '*informal recorded discussions*' occurred with four movement personnel<sup>7</sup> and small group interviews (four to six participants plus the researcher) were conducted with

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<sup>6</sup> Due to time and accessibility constraints, it was not possible to pilot the questionnaire in other UWCs

<sup>7</sup> It proved impossible to devise a schedule for interviews with UWC personnel as their roles and backgrounds varied substantially and on most occasions, the researcher had to use chance encounters with these individuals as opportunities to gather data. Therefore, while the researcher still applied a semi-structured format to this discourse and broached areas of discussion appropriate to each individual's involvement in UWC, these encounters are referred to as '*informal recorded discussions*' and their *transcripts* were not as easily or reliably compared within and between data sets as other interview transcripts.

sixty-five students and six graduates. All interviews and discussions were tape recorded with each interviewee's permission and research funds were allocated for the transcription of each interview in full, in order to protect the interviewee against misinterpretation, to capture the vividness of their speech and to preserve a full record of the interaction (Stenhouse 1987). Students' and teachers' interviews were usually conducted between college activities and were, therefore, allotted between thirty and forty-five minutes. Other interviewees were often able to set aside more time; heads', graduates', student selectors' and movement personnel's interviews lasted between forty-five and ninety minutes. In most instances it proved possible to maintain manageable data sets and adhere to the data collection and college schedules without 'cutting short' interviews.

### ***Semi-structured individual interviews***

Following guidance offered by Merriam (1988: 74), semi-structured individual interviews were directed by a list of open-ended questions to be '*explored*'. These questions (and various cues) arose from the preliminary investigation discussed previously and were set out on schedules as a tool to prompt the researcher (Appendix XI), but neither the exact wording nor the order of the questions was strictly adhered to<sup>8</sup>. This format initiated discussion concerning broad areas of thinking and experience. While the semi-structured nature of these discussions meant that data comparisons could be made within and between respondent groups, they also provided enough flexibility for the researcher '*to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging worldview of the respondent, and to new ideas on the topic*' (Merriam 1988: 74).

The content of individual interview schedules differed somewhat for students, graduates, heads, teachers, and student selectors in line with the subjects that each of these groups was most informed to comment upon. There were, however, themes or questions common to most groups of respondents, which made it possible to identify and compare different perspectives on the same issues in the process of '*multiple data set*' triangulation (Denzin 1970; Bryman 1988; Brannen 1992). For example, with the exception of student selectors, all interviewees were asked to discuss the way in which they felt UWC experiences influenced students and each interview concluded with some consideration of the UWC Mission in relation to college learning experiences.

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<sup>8</sup> Consideration of the UWC Mission was reserved until the end of each interview in order to avoid the possibility that it might set an agenda for the interviewee's discussion of UWC learning and its outcomes

My preliminary visit to AC prior to official data collection provided some very useful insights that informed the design of data collection tools. For example, the observation that individuals often articulated their thinking and experiences far more readily and in much greater detail on a second encounter with the researcher prompted the use of two interviews with all students and most graduates<sup>9</sup> (the ‘*exploratory*’ and the ‘*focused*’ interview). This approach allowed the interviewee and the researcher time to establish a basic rapport and a short period of reflection (usually overnight) upon the issues discussed in the first interview. It also offered the researcher an opportunity to probe where necessary for elaboration or clarification on points made in the first interview and to verify/negotiate initial understandings of the interviewee’s perspective. Pilot investigation confirmed that the researcher and the interviewee were able to have a much franker and more focused discussion in the second interview, which increased the depth and detail of these data sets significantly.

Given the purpose of the Focused Interview, most of its questions or areas of discussion were only determined after the first interview and as this second interview was in progress, but piloting did establish that the difficult subject of expectations was responded to more thoroughly in the second interview and, therefore, pre-determined its inclusion in the Focused Interview Schedule. In addition, a question designed to facilitate the triangulation of an interviewee’s responses was used to conclude each Focused Interview. This question asked the interviewee to ‘sum up’ his/her UWC experience and its impacts.

### ***Group interviews***

The idea of the group interview also arose from the preliminary visit to AC. During this visit I noted, as Watts and Ebbutt (1987) and others had in other contexts, that the dynamics of group discussion produced particularly rich data, as they prompted and extended articulation, illustrated where thinking and experiences were similar or different, and demonstrated established social codes and relationships. At this stage, however, I also noted a number of disadvantages to group discussion as data collection tool. For example, sometimes discussion was dominated or monopolised by one individual or digressed into irrelevant interplay between personalities.

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<sup>9</sup> Data collection with other groups of interviewees, such as teachers and heads, may also have benefited from this approach, but unfortunately the restrictions on both the researcher’s and these interviewees’ time allowed only one interview

In order to minimise these disadvantages I adapted a tool used by Mok and Krause (1995) in their study of the school life of adolescent girls in Sydney, Australia. In the evaluation of UWC, this tool was referred to as the '*Visual Representation Sheet*' (Appendix XI, 6) and was introduced to students and graduates at the beginning of each group interview as a means to '*gather thoughts*' about their college experiences '*using pictures, labels, statements or icons*', which could be used to prompt and inspire discussion during the interview itself.

The merits of i) reassuring students that these representations were not expected to be 'works of art', but rather 'doodles' that would have no independent purpose beyond the interview context, ii) encouraging students to talk to one another and share their representations in the process of compiling them, and iii) the researcher leaving the group alone with a time limit of ten minutes to complete their representations, were recognised when this tool was piloted. The subsequent use of the completed Visual Representation Sheets during each group interview not only prompted and inspired discussion, but effectively kept discussion focused on relevant issues and elicited the involvement of all participants in the process of discussing their representations with the group.

Watts and Ebbutt (*op.cit.*) noted that group interviews inhibited the discussion of personal matters, however this was rarely found to be so in UWC contexts. In fact, a reluctance to discuss personal matters was only found amongst some new first year students and day students. It appeared likely that the 'uninhibited' involvement of other students and graduates was due at least in part to the fact that most participants had established strong bonds or a personal familiarity as a result of residential college life.

Piloting of the group interview demonstrated that i) the optimum size for productive group discussion was five UWC students or graduates plus the researcher, ii) student group interviews were more successful when conducted within one year group as first year students often found it difficult to participate in discussion of the experiences of second year students, and iii) data was richer when the researcher took on the role of facilitator, intervening only to distribute the time fairly between group participants and to probe a point for clarification or elaboration.

### **Phase One: Observation**

Observations of college life were made in each of the UWCs visited during this evaluation. Although limited time precluded the participant observation often associated with the research approach adopted for this study, the fact that I was resident on campus during fieldwork visits, used communal facilities, ate with college members and ‘sat in’ on various day-to-day activities, not only provided what Stenhouse (1987: 216) called the ‘*superficial appearance*’ of participant observation, but also some of its insights. For example, I experienced the challenge that the deliberate absence of locks on doors in some UWCs presents for one’s trust of fellow human beings: an experience often referred to by new students and staff in particular. Merriam (1988: 93) referred to this partial involvement as the ‘*observer as participant*’. In this role, my participation in the research context was secondary to my role as ‘*information gatherer*’.

As an outsider in the UWC communities visited, I brought a ‘naive eye’ to college life. This naivety was advantageous in that it prompted me to note events and behaviour that, for example, had become so routine to members of college communities that they were not mentioned by interviewees. However, this naivety also meant that my observations could not be used validly as an independent source of data, because they had little meaning without the cultural knowledge of an insider to explain them. Observation data was clarified and given meaning, therefore, by data collected via other means and used progressively in this manner to increase my familiarity with the learning context and, in turn, to prompt more informed intervention in and consideration of the research context (Adelman 1981).

In line with the exploratory approach adopted in the first phase of this evaluation, observations in each college began in a largely unstructured manner. However as my familiarity with each college community and its activities increased, the data-gathering value of certain situations given the evaluation’s purpose became more evident and acted as the ‘*prime agency of selection in what to observe, and what to record of what one observes*’ (Woods 1985: 58).

Observations conducted in each college focused on students’ experiences and notes were made, for example, of the settings and activities in which their experiences were observed, the participants and forms of interaction they involved, the verbal and non-

verbal behaviour they instigated, and their duration and frequency. On most occasions, notes were taken while observations were in progress; on other occasions, notes were made as soon as possible after an observation had been made. Fuller notes of all observations were typed and considered at the end of each fieldwork visit.

### **Phase One: Student journals**

Sixty-three students completed and returned journals of their experiences over a ten-week period in the first term of a new academic year. The purpose of this method of data collection was threefold. It was intended to i) provide more than the 'snapshot' of students' experiences and thinking gathered during short fieldwork visits, ii) offer insights into students' learning in progress and the cumulative effect of their experiences over time, and iii) minimise the influence of the researcher upon the data gathered.

As the sample journal page in Appendix XI (7) exemplifies, student participants were asked to document on a weekly basis one or more incident that they felt had had a particular impact upon them and describe the nature of that impact. In addition, they were asked to reflect upon all their journal entries at the end of the ten-week period and to describe how they felt about their experiences and their impact generally at this later date.

Piloting and informal discussion of this data collection method with students at AC and WK established that it would be possible for them to maintain a journal over a ten week period early in the academic year and that a weekly entry in which they could write openly about their experiences would not only be an interesting task for them, but would elicit useful data for the evaluation. During fieldwork visits to each of the colleges, I also recorded brief 'chats' with each of the student journal writers, in order to verify/negotiate my understanding of their entries to date and to encourage them to maintain their journals throughout the ten week period.



### **Phase One: Documentary evidence**

A large amount of documentary evidence was collected in the course of the evaluation. In line with the exploratory approach adopted in other data collection in Phase One, almost all documents<sup>10</sup> concerning UWC were considered potentially useful and ultimately this data set included a range of primary and secondary<sup>11</sup> sources of information, such as movement and college promotional material, written histories, application forms, letters, magazine and newspaper articles, and statements of philosophy, aims, mission and policy.

The use of documentary evidence had a number of advantages. Like other sources of data, the documents collected were firmly grounded in the case study context and represented various perspectives on UWC learning. They also provided access to information that would have been more difficult or impossible to gather by other means. For example, historical records of the movement's origins and development over three decades were likely to be more accurate and detailed than the recollections of the longest-standing members of UWC gathered during research interviews. Furthermore, this data existed independently of the research process and therefore provided another means to check the trustworthiness of data over which I had more influence.

However, the recognised limitations of documentary evidence also influenced its use in this evaluation. For example, not only was it difficult to discern the accuracy and authenticity of documents, but also, like observation data, it was often difficult to understand documentary evidence fully without the cultural knowledge of an insider to explain it. For these reasons, documentary evidence was not used independently, rather its origins and content were considered critically in the light of other data and on occasions, were discussed directly with appropriate interviewees.

### **Phase Two: The Student Questionnaire**

A postal questionnaire was completed and returned by 551 students<sup>12</sup> across the movement in April 1996<sup>13</sup> (Appendix XI, 8). Its purpose was to check the accuracy,

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<sup>10</sup> Only documents which offered insights into UWC learning experiences and their outcomes were considered relevant to the evaluation. Documents such as financial accounts and medical records were excluded from the data set.

<sup>11</sup> Bell 1992

<sup>12</sup> 92% response rate overall

<sup>13</sup> To heighten the comparability of questionnaire responses across colleges, the questionnaire was administered later in WK (June 1996) as its academic year is January-December, which contrasts with the August-May academic year in other colleges.

generalisability and patterns of the findings arising from data gathered during fieldwork in Phase One and, in so doing, to '*deepen and extend qualitative analysis*' (Silverman 1985: 140). In line with the evaluation's overall approach, the use of cognitive tests, attitude scales or other projective techniques were rejected as the intention of the questionnaire was not to test or rate college activities and learning outcomes, but to elicit data which could be used to develop an understanding of the meanings students attribute to them. As a simple, categorical counting device, the questionnaire's role was complementary to the evaluation's qualitative data collection techniques and in line with its theoretical underpinnings.

By using the questionnaire at this stage in the research, it was possible to capitalise on the various recognised strengths of this data collection technique, while minimising the influence of its known weaknesses (Cohen and Manion 1994; Oppenheim 1992). For example, at a minimal cost in terms of time and resources, the questionnaire provided access to the experiences and thinking of a much larger group of students than it had been possible to include previously in the evaluation. However, the risks of it imposing an inappropriate agenda for enquiry or producing data that was of minimal use because it lacked explanation were limited by the fact that the questionnaire was based on and supported by qualitative data. The questionnaire's high response rate may also be attributed in part to prior fieldwork as most of its respondents had met the researcher (although they had not participated in data collection previously), had a knowledge of the evaluation, and, given many of their concluding comments (final page of the questionnaire), felt the questionnaire addressed the issues of most importance to them.

Using Bell's (1987) advice, the questionnaire's effectiveness was also heightened by careful consideration of i) what kind of information could be gathered by this tool and on what subjects, ii) the types of questions required and their wording, iii) the layout and appearance of the questionnaire, iv) its sample of respondents, and v) the mechanisms for its distribution and return. Consideration was also given to the implications of each of the above for the analysis of responses.

Given the questionnaire's purpose and groundwork, it was possible to capitalise on the 'user-friendly' format of closed, multiple choice or single response questions which required a simple tick (or similar) in a box to categorise students' experiences and their

perceived impacts. Open-ended questions were only used to allow for the unanticipated response and, in one instance, for students to make a list of activities. The key themes, issues and language arising from initial analysis of the qualitative data sets guided the subject matter and much of the wording of the questionnaire. To facilitate completion, the questionnaire's layout and appearance were clear, consistent, attractive and conspicuous (coloured covers); the sequence of its questions progressed from straightforward factual questions to relatively more demanding non-factual questions and from the general to the more specific within 'theme modules'<sup>14</sup>; and at various points, some respondents were filtered out of inappropriate questions.

The questionnaire's distribution and return was organised through a key staff contact in each college. But, in line with the evaluation's ethical code, full written information concerning the questionnaire and its related study was sent to participants directly; the staff contact was asked to encourage rather than pressurise the participation of the student sample; and a sticker was included so that students could seal their own questionnaire on completion for confidentiality. The staff contact in each college was asked to remind students who did not return a completed questionnaire within a week of the importance of their contribution and to issue spare copies where necessary. Due to the high response, it was not deemed necessary to pursue non-responses any further, except in the case of WK where the original response rate was at least 21% lower than in any other college. In this case, a further reminder to students on behalf of the researcher elicited five more questionnaires.

Piloting of the questionnaire in AC in March 1996 identified points where adjustments were needed (mainly in terms of wording and some missing response categories); established that it produced useful and manageable data; demonstrated that the inclusion of questions designed to check response consistency was successful; and offered reassurance that despite its length, students enjoyed completing the questionnaire and could do so within an acceptable period of time (a maximum of forty-five minutes).

Originally it was intended to administer a postal questionnaire to UWC graduates, as well as students. However, as the evaluation progressed, a number of factors came to

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<sup>14</sup> Questions were clustered within themes e.g. student selection, international understanding and tolerance, life after UWC, the formal curriculum, expectations.

light that led to an adaptation of the research methodology in this respect. Interviews conducted with graduates demonstrated that, unlike student data, the long-term impacts of the UWC experience were too diverse, dynamic and sometimes, subtle to be investigated adequately by the ‘ticks in boxes’ format of a postal questionnaire. In addition, given the poor response rates to other recent postal surveys<sup>15</sup> within the UWC Graduate Network, I was concerned that this study would elicit a similarly small and biased response, which would defeat the purpose of this data collection technique. Therefore the time and resources available were used to conduct a larger number of interviews with graduates, thereby increasing the quality, quantity and diversity of the data already acquired.

### **Building a sample**

The aim of Phase One of the data collection was to acquire as broad a diversity of perspectives as possible on the UWC experience and its impacts. To this end, a strategy referred to as ‘*maximum variation*’ sampling was adopted (Guba and Lincoln 1985). This strategy involved not only establishing the participation of individuals from all ‘role groups’ within the movement (i.e. students, graduates, teachers, heads, student selectors and movement personnel), but also seeking the full variety of perspectives within each group.

In the case of graduate data collection, maximum variation was achieved by building a sample gradually as the evaluation progressed using a technique known as ‘*snowball sampling*’ (Cohen and Manion 1994). This technique drew on the issues arising in interviews, as well as interviewees’ contacts with other UWC graduates, to identify and include perspectives not yet directly involved in the research. Both face-to-face and telephone interviews were used to collect data from the individuals that this procedure identified and the process continued until a point of ‘*saturation*’ was reached at which there appeared to be no more new data to uncover (Glaser and Strauss 1967). In this way, it was possible to gather a varied, and seemingly comprehensive, data set which included, for example, the perspectives of graduates who had not maintained contact with UWC Networks and would not have been involved in the evaluation if other

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<sup>15</sup> E.g. a postal survey conducted by Taylor for AC in 1994 received only 12 responses from a total of 51 questionnaires administered. the UWC Network Survey received a 43% response rate from its total graduate population in 1992 (N = 12,749), and, in 1986, a low response rate to Thulin’s graduate questionnaire was attributed to the fact that a large number of the addresses stored on the UWC’s computer database for graduates were obsolete

sampling procedures had been used (Appendix X, 2 for the basic characteristics of the graduate sample).

However, due to the practical constraints of short fieldwork visits to UWCs, it was not possible to apply the snowball sampling technique to other data collection in Phase One. The sampling procedure for the research participation of student selectors and movement personnel was entirely opportunistic and usually took advantage of the access that fieldwork visits provided to internationally located individuals; however, the composition and numbers of students, teachers, and heads involved in fieldwork had to be predetermined in order to plan the logistics of each visit.

Although it proved possible to interview all college heads<sup>16</sup>, student and teacher data collection involved using preliminary and pilot investigation to establish a crude set of criteria for sampling. This initial investigation appeared to indicate that contact with a varied set of perspectives on UWC learning would require the involvement of a sample of individuals from all colleges and whose characteristics spanned the nationalities, college residency circumstances, sexes, academic subject and service involvement, college year, and funding circumstances which comprised each college population. Using the information colleges and the UWC networks were able to provide in relation to these characteristics, students and teachers were sampled for involvement in individual and group interviews and journal writing.

The sampling techniques used in Phase One were not designed to build a random sample or to gather generalisable findings, rather they were intended to facilitate a wide-ranging exploration of UWC experiences and learning. Conversely, the student questionnaire was designed to determine the generalisability of the issues that arose from Phase One of the data collection and to that end, a '*random stratified sample*' of the total student population in each college was identified for involvement in Phase Two. This sample constituted proportionally representative numbers of students across certain student characteristic variables, which initial analysis of qualitative data had indicated were influential within the learning experience (i.e. sex, college year, nationality, boarder/day student, scholar/fee-payer).

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<sup>16</sup> With exception of the head at Simon Bolivar UWC

While research participants involved in preliminary and pilot investigation for Phase One were chosen at random, those involved in Phase Two piloting were representative of the criteria intended to select the student sample to whom the questionnaire would be administered. In order to guarantee that all participants came equally 'fresh' to the research experience, none of those involved in piloting were subsequently involved in the main study and similarly, no individual was involved in more than one method of data collection at any stage in the evaluation. Each data collection activity received a very high level of attendance or rate of response (Appendix X, 1) and very few individuals who were selected to participate declined to do so. On the rare occasions this did occur, an alternative participant with similar sampling characteristics was found.

For the reasons previously stated, all UWCs were directly involved in the evaluation's fieldwork with the exception of SB. The time that the scale of this involvement allowed for fieldwork in each college dictated not only what was feasible methodologically, but also determined how many research participants could be involved in each means of data collection (see Appendix X for figures). These circumstances also prevented nineteen graduate interviewees meeting with me on a second occasion for the Focused Interview and provided the opportunity for only one group interview to be conducted with graduates.

## **Data analysis**

### ***A consistent approach***

The theoretical underpinnings of the approach taken towards this investigation, and the influences upon it of certain practical and value considerations, had important implications for the analysis of data, as well as its collection. In seeking to evaluate UWC learning experiences and their outcomes by using insiders' perspectives, decisions had to be made about, for example, how much weight would be given to various insider accounts and how and to what degree interpretations of these accounts would be made.

An ‘*interpretative-descriptive*’ approach appeared the most appropriate way to analyse the wealth of qualitative data produced by this investigation (Belenky 1992<sup>17</sup>). This approach involved some selection and interpretation of data on my behalf, but by ‘*weaving descriptions, speaker’s words, fieldnote quotations, and [my] own interpretations into a rich and believable narrative*’, every effort was made to remain true to insiders’ perspectives (Strauss and Corbin 1990: 22). In this particular study, the perspectives of those closest to the learning experience, UWC students’ and graduates’, were given most weight in analysis, but a multiplicity of other perspectives were also considered and presented.

### ***Analysis procedures for qualitative data***

The analysis of qualitative data was an on-going and inductive activity designed to progressively inform further data collection and analysis. The particular procedures employed in this evaluation were inspired and guided by the ‘*constant comparative method*’ of data analysis (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Guba and Lincoln 1985). Initially raw data was studied and re-studied as whole units (e.g. an interview, a journal) in order to establish a familiarity with issues within the context in which they were raised and to make notes by hand of tentative themes and patterns. This process of analysis was enhanced by simultaneous consideration of relevant literature in the fields such as international education, service, and citizenship. For example, the findings of research conducted by Lynch (1992) drew my attention to the fact that a respect for oneself and others arose repeatedly in explanations of life in UWCs and appeared to be perceived as a fundamental, non-negotiable principle.

The schedule of data collection allowed periods of time between individual data collection appointments<sup>18</sup> and between each fieldwork visit to consider data and relevant literature. First impressions of the data were compared within and between data sets as they developed and they were expanded upon, revised and added to where necessary in the light of these comparisons and the insights offered by the literature. Coded index cards were used to record emerging commonalities, differences, and unique instances in accounts of UWC learning experiences and their outcomes. By comparing and sorting the details on these cards, it was possible to identify and map

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<sup>17</sup> Belenky as quoted in Maykut and Morehouse (1994: 122) - original paper unobtainable.

<sup>18</sup> The recordings of all Exploratory Interviews with individual students and graduates were listened to by researcher, usually at the end of fieldwork each day, in order that this initial analysis could be used to inform discussion in each respective Focused Interview

themes, categorisations and patterns in the data and to select pieces of verbatim narrative that illustrated and justified these interpretations.

Pieces of verbatim narrative, as well as the quotations and observations ultimately used to illustrate points made in this thesis and the report to UWC, were selected on the basis of two criteria. Each illustration i) represented clearly and concisely either a group's perspective/experience or a unique instance and required little or no inference to be made on the part of the reader, and ii) derived from first-hand experience or knowledge wherever possible (Rubin and Rubin 1995). The appropriateness of my interpretations and my selection of quotations and observations was checked by returning to the full data set in its original forms on two occasions. The first occasion arose during, and informed, the planning of the Student Questionnaire and the second occasion was coordinated with the analysis of the questionnaire responses for the purposes of data triangulation.

To facilitate effective preparation and management of a large amount of data for and during analysis, systems of coding were used to identify data types, sources, dates, sequences, and emerging categorisations. The following codes are examples of the simplest of those used to facilitate analysis and to ensure the anonymity of data throughout the research process<sup>19</sup>:

AC03FC<sup>1</sup> (Atlantic UWC, participant number, female, current student, college year)  
 AD05FG<sup>85</sup> (Adriatic UWC, participant number, female, graduate, graduating year)  
 LPC01MT (Li Po Chun UWC, participant number, male, teacher)

In addition, these codes were recorded in schedules, which illustrated when and how often a piece of data had been 'visited' for analysis. They were also mapped to show where various themes and categorisations originated from and the patterns of relationships within and between data units.

These procedures constituted what Levine (1985) called '*manual data manipulation*': a lengthy and painstaking process of organising and reorganising data by hand. The anticipated demands of this approach upon time and resources led to some

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<sup>19</sup> This coding is also used to label quotations throughout this thesis



consideration being given to the use of computer packages for qualitative analysis, such as Nudist (Richards 1994). However, after reviewing the procedures of various computer packages, this idea was ultimately rejected in light of the nature and practical circumstances of investigation in Phase One, which suited the more sensitive, flexible and cost-effective approach of human data processing.

### ***Analysis procedures for quantitative data***

The nature and practical circumstances of investigation in Phase Two were somewhat different to those of Phase One. By Phase Two, the aim of data collection had shifted from exploration and discovery to checking and counting within established categories. Consequently, data processing and analysis by computer was considered not only appropriate, but also necessary to handle the large amount of numerical data produced by the Student Questionnaire. The computer programme, *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS), was piloted and chosen to tabulate the responses of 551 questionnaire participants, to calculate their frequencies, and to check their statistical significance.

Following Moser and Kalton's (1971) advice, questionnaire data was 'edited' prior to entry into the computer database. This process involved checking the completeness, accuracy and uniformity of responses within each questionnaire. All response categories were coded before the administration of the questionnaire to aid data processing, but to avoid the distraction for respondents of codes in margins and to save space, this coding was printed on transparent sheets that were placed over questionnaire pages at the stage of data input. On most occasions questionnaire data was entered onto an SPSS spreadsheet by two people (a volunteer and myself) in order to reduce the risk of input errors. In addition, several internal consistency checks were run on entered data to identify and correct any errors that had been made (Hoinville and Jowell 1978).

All responses were treated as nominal or categorical data and were classified with numerical labels for entry onto SPSS spreadsheets. These labels had no underlying linear scale or numerical value; they simply signified the category of each response. Nominal measures have fewer and less powerful statistical techniques at their disposal than scaled measures (Oppenheim 1992), but as no more than checks and comparisons

of response frequency were required at this stage in the investigation, more sophisticated measures and statistical techniques were not needed.

Several questions included in the questionnaire could have been treated as scaled data (e.g. Q. Item C). However, given the subjective and often ‘value added’ nature of responses, it was decided that assumptions could not be made about the equality of intervals on and between rating scales. As a consequence, it was felt to be more appropriate to treat this data as categorical. For the same reasons, the fine distinctions in responses arising from questionnaire items, which offered students several options either side of a neutral point on a rating scale (e.g. Q. Item K2)<sup>20</sup>, were not considered to be metrically meaningful and were combined in data processing to create single categories representing the general direction of responses.

Once the frequency of responses had been established, they were checked for statistically significant variations across two or more respondent sub-groups (e.g. residents and day students) or from the expected distribution using the Pearson Chi-squared test of significance. Findings were considered statistically significant when they had 0.05 or 0.01 probability of occurring by chance. The precise nature of significant differences was established by studying the cell frequencies in relevant crosstabulations of raw data (Youngman 1978).

Statistical findings are presented in two forms throughout this thesis. Significant differences within the data are reported as such in words and in numbers (the calculated *p* value), but in many instances the ‘readability’ of the text has been maintained by using the following terminology instead of raw figures:

91-99%	Almost all
76-90%	A vast majority/most
56-75%	A majority/many
45-55%	Half
25-44%	A minority/some
10-24%	A small minority/a few
1-9%	Very few

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<sup>20</sup> This format was used to avoid ‘errors of central tendency’ (Oppenheim 1992: 233) which occur when respondents avoid committing themselves to extreme points on a rating scale by persistently using the central, neutral point.

### **The trustworthiness of the findings**

Given that this evaluation was conducted by a single researcher, it was especially important that its procedures of data collection and analysis included means to increase the trustworthiness of the findings in order to avoid the criticism of bias. Guided by Guba and Lincoln's (1985) advice on this subject, the following steps were taken to encourage confidence in the outcomes of the research:

- Different sources and types of data were triangulated to check for the convergence or contradiction of themes and patterns between and within each
- My interpretations of data were verified and negotiated with relevant research participants wherever possible (e.g. the Focused Interview, journal 'chats')
- Checks were made on the internal consistency of all data
- Wherever appropriate, my intervention was minimised during data collection
- The accuracy and generalisability of the findings emerging from the central core of qualitative data was checked by administering a large scale questionnaire
- Qualitative data was revisited on a number of occasions to justify or adjust interpretations in the light of new data
- A description of the research processes and direct quotations from the field were included in the evaluation report to UWC, as well as this thesis, in order to provide readers with a basis for judging the credibility of the study
- A number of presentations concerning the research in progress were made to audiences of fellow researchers, academics and students in order to receive feedback that might develop and/or question my thinking

### **Some reflections on the research methods employed**

In the process of writing this thesis, a degree of reflection on methodological issues was possible that had not been possible in the preparation of the UWC report. The following discussion considers what this evaluation has demonstrated about appropriate and effective methods for this type of investigation.

### ***Using quantitative research strategies to study culture***

Until relatively recent times, emphasis was placed on the measurement of school 'climate' or 'ethos'. The work of Rutter *et al.* (1979) was indicative of the quantitative approaches - characterised by checklists, tables and elaborate statistical analysis - favoured in this field of research until the late 1980s. Finlayson (1987) was one of a number of researchers who, having employed quantitative methods, criticised their suitability for the task of understanding school climate. He, like Strivens (1985), concluded that school climate was far too complex a phenomenon to be dissected into variables and needed to be considered in a more holistic way. During the 1990s, not only did the term 'culture' start to be used to describe the overall character of a school, but also more qualitative approaches predominated in this field of research.

Nevertheless, Prosser (1999:6) points out that '*methodologies applied to the study of school culture are disappointingly impoverished*' and suggests the way forward may be to apply a combination of quantitative and qualitative strategies. As discussed earlier in this chapter, a large scale postal questionnaire - a research tool commonly associated with a quantitative approach to research - was used to compliment qualitative data collection techniques in this evaluation of UWC. The questionnaire included an item that referred directly to 'college ethos' (Q. item C), as well as other items intended to gather related data (Q. items E2, K3 and M3).

These questionnaire items produced useful data in the sense that they concurred with qualitative findings and indicated their generalisability within colleges and in many cases, across the UWC movement. However, it is important to note two points when considering the effectiveness of quantifying views of school ethos. First, the terminology and categories used in these items were drawn directly from qualitative data, therefore they had an internal relevance, rather than being imposed on the research context. As a result, data gathered from these items was pertinent to the bigger and more complex picture that qualitative data was providing of UWC culture. Second, although two of these items were presented to respondents as scales, ultimately it was decided that the data could only be treated as categorical due to its subjective nature. Given both points, it can be said that quantification had a limited, but particular usefulness within an interpretative approach to researching culture.

### ***The use of existing theory and research findings in this research***

Qualitative evaluation has often been compared with story telling (Greene 1993). In this tradition, rich and enlightening accounts of a context as perceived by various stakeholders are used to increase understanding of that context and to suggest directions for development. As discussed earlier in this chapter, this approach was well suited to the theoretical, practical and value orientations of this evaluation. However, as Greene (1993) goes on to point out, this approach often results in a reluctance on the part of some evaluators to assert responsibility for anything more than the story, or alternatively to consider theory in the field only after theory has ‘emerged’ from their own data.

Although existing theory did not set the stage for this evaluation and the primary concern was to respond to the issues arising from the research context itself, theory and research findings within relevant literature were used in an inductive manner throughout the evaluation. At each of the intervals between data collection the themes emerging from the UWC data were compared and contrasted with relevant literature. While this approach appears to fall between models suggested in literature concerning research design (e.g. Creswell 1994), it was very effective in the sense that it illuminated data analysis in an on-going manner. The dangers of theory being imposed on data (Patton 1980) were avoided by returning to the field to verify analysis as it developed and by triangulating sources of data to check the resilience of ideas deriving from the literature.

A further benefit of using existing literature and research in this way relates to the relevance and generalisability of this evaluation’s findings beyond the UWC context. Given that this research was conducted in UWCs only, caution has been exercised in this respect. However, by considering existing theory and research findings in an on-going manner, it was possible to identify progressively, and therefore explore further, instances where the evaluation data corroborated findings from other learning contexts and where UWCs appeared to provide examples of effective practice that were limited or lacking in the literature (e.g. citizenship learning). On this basis, the potential generalisability and relevance of some findings to the broader context of education are considered in this thesis.

## Chapter Two

### The Evolution of the UWC Movement

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United World Colleges [UWCs], like other institutions, are shaped by their history, their context and the people within them. It is impossible, therefore, to discuss the UWC movement, its modern day character, aims and influence without reference to its origins and development over more than three decades. The historical analysis that follows is designed to contextualise and inform subsequent consideration of the research findings relating to the contemporary movement, but by necessity it is limited to those aspects of UWC's development, aims and practices considered most relevant to the research findings and does not purport to be a comprehensive profile.

#### The conception of UWC

Kurt Hahn (1886-1974) dubbed himself the '*midwife*' of the UWC movement in the early 1960s, but he began his association with education as early as 1920, when he opened a school in Salem Castle in his native Germany. This was a time when military instincts and ideals were still strong in Europe, but Hahn was determined to demonstrate the role he believed education could play in developing a '*peace of understanding*' by bringing together the children of former enemies, Britain and Germany. While Salem's reputation as a prestigious school became widely known in the period between the two world wars, Hahn also faced no small amount of criticism on the grounds that the education offered in Salem was contrary to the spirit of nationalism and patriotism being promoted elsewhere in Germany at this time.

In the early 1930s, Hahn made several gestures of opposition to the activities and influence of the Nazis in Germany and as a consequence was imprisoned by the Gestapo in 1933. Although arbitration on the part of Ramsey MacDonald, then Prime Minister in Britain, secured Hahn's release, he was forced into exile and took refuge in Britain in 1934. Once reconciled to the fact that he could not return to Germany and Salem for the foreseeable future, he quickly set about recreating Salem in Britain in the

form of Gordonstoun, a public boarding school which opened in April 1934 in a picturesque and isolated location close to the coast of the Firth of Moray in Scotland. Convinced of the merits of students from different backgrounds living and learning together, Hahn, as founder and headmaster, ensured school fees were means graded and applications from foreign students were encouraged. Gordonstoun adopted a highly structured and dense timetable, which comprised demanding intellectual, physical and social challenges and was firmly rooted in Hahn's belief that schools should develop 'all-rounders', educated not only in the academic disciplines, but also, for example, in leadership, self-respect and service to others.

When Gordonstoun was evacuated to Wales in 1941, Hahn founded the first Outward Bound School<sup>1</sup> in Aberdovey and in subsequent years, he played a part in establishing the American-British Foundation for European Education, the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme<sup>2</sup> and the Trevelyan Scholarships for entry to the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. However, it was only after a visit to a NATO Staff Training College in 1956, during which Hahn observed military officers of different nationalities working together for peace, that he wondered what could be achieved by deliberately bringing multinational groups of younger people together for this purpose over a longer period of time (UWCIDO 1996b). In the late 1950s, he and Lawrence Darvall (Air Marshal in the Royal Air Force and Commandant of the NATO College) embodied this idea in a plan to establish a residential college for sixteen to nineteen year olds from the 'Atlantic Community'.

### **The philosophical origins of UWC**

Hahn never wrote a complete statement of his educational principles, but it is believed that they were influenced formatively by his studies of Plato at Oxford University between 1910 and 1914. It seems Plato's aim '*to educate a class of leaders in a "healthy pasture" remote from the corrupting environment, whose task it would be to regenerate society*'<sup>3</sup> struck a chord with Hahn. Evidence of these Platonic principles, and in fact borrowings from some of the most diverse sources in terms of thinking and

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<sup>1</sup> Short-term residential schools designed to build character by involving pupils of 15-19 years in demanding physical experiences

<sup>2</sup> A voluntary leisure-time programme conceived to give young people a structure for personal achievement, community service, and adventure

<sup>3</sup> Skidelsky (1969: 185)

practice<sup>4</sup>, can be found in many of Hahn's assertions on education and in the influence he had upon various educational institutions.

Hahn believed in the 'essential' child - natural idealism, compassion, commitment, capacity for hard work and sense of adventure - and in this sense, his views were in line with some other progressive educators. However, while other progressivists focused on the ills of traditional education within the school walls, Hahn was concerned with the corrupting influences of society at large upon the adolescent. Although he was renowned for his moral crusade against '*the poisonous passions*' of puberty<sup>5</sup>, he identified several '*diseases*' of modern society<sup>6</sup> against which he believed education could act as a countervailing force:

...education can build up protective tastes and habits likely to provide immunity<sup>7</sup>

Totalitarianism in Germany and Italy, the Second World War and the attitudes 'ohne mich'<sup>8</sup> and 'I couldn't care less' only strengthened Hahn's resolve further to promote education as a cure for what he perceived to be the ills of modern society (McMahon 1993). To this end, he proposed a form of education that fostered physical fitness, self-discipline, memory and imagination, enterprise, skill and craftsmanship, compassion and community spirit, as well as traditional academic achievement<sup>9</sup>.

Hahn believed that sharing challenging, physical experiences did as much for the mind as for the body and this was one premise on which he proposed to establish bonds between young people of different nationalities which '*might, in their maturity, make some small contribution to better understanding and the prevention of war between nations*' (Peterson 1972: 5); he said '*... by making them sea-sick together in a gale I have done something for international relations*'<sup>10</sup>. However, it was compassion and

<sup>4</sup> E.g. Goethe's ideas for education in simulated peasant societies, Weber and Durkheim's discussion of the disintegration of society, and not least, English public schools, in particular Abbotsholme and its headmaster, Cecil Reddie, who believed in education as training of character rather than intellect.

<sup>5</sup> Hahn believed in preserving sexual innocence throughout the adolescent years and advocated outdoor activities, adventure, and service to the community as means by which young people could be distracted from premature eroticism and the destruction of childhood vitality (Skidelsky *op.cit.*)

<sup>6</sup> Hahn identified three *diseases* of modern society - 1) '*soft living*' - lack of physical fitness, initiative and self-discipline, 2) '*confused restlessness*' - lack of skill, craftsmanship, creativity and pride in work, 3) impersonality of modern state - a decreasing sense of community

<sup>7</sup> Hahn (1936) extracted from Skidelsky (*op.cit.*: 232) - original source not cited

<sup>8</sup> 'without me'

<sup>9</sup> Outlined in The Observer, November 13th, 1960

<sup>10</sup> Extracted from Samaranayake (1991: 60)



service to others, particularly in the form of rescue services, which were at the heart of Hahn's thinking on education. He advanced that '*in rescuing and saving life, people will react even more passionately than they will to the appeal of war*'<sup>11</sup> and in doing so, he echoed a long established call for '*a moral equivalent of war*'<sup>12</sup>.

Hahn's commitment to the idea of service was also rooted in the importance he gave to active civic duty. He was fond of quoting Plato: '*He who would help his country must have not only the power to think but the will to act*'. His own life and the initiatives he established demonstrated the significance he gave to this principle. In his mind, action was the critical process and logical consequence of learning. '*All education that Hahn cared for was aimed at changing young people's attitudes in such a way as to lead them to change their action*' (Peterson, *op.cit*: 2).

Hahn himself acknowledged that much of his thinking on education was '*cribbed and copied*' from a variety of sources<sup>13</sup>, but whilst his ideas were inspired by his concern for the state of modern society and by his belief in the need for social reform, they could not be referred to as those of a social reformer. His speeches were said to be divided into two parts: diagnosis and remedy. In the context of what he believed to be a societal crisis, Hahn argued that education was the tool for change and that the international colleges he and his supporters proposed were the institutional media through which change could be brought about. He was explicit about the concerns that inspired his vision of an alternative education and the form this education should take. However, his notions of the future simply realised the values he cherished most, they did not constitute a defined model of 'good' society, nor did they specify the roles of those fortified against the '*diseases*' of modern society in adult life.

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<sup>11</sup> The Observer, *loc.cit*.

<sup>12</sup> The idea of '*a moral equivalent of war*' was discussed at the Universal Peace Conference held in Boston in 1904 and more fully developed by James (1910) in '*The Moral Equivalent of War*' International Conciliation, No. 27

<sup>13</sup> Hahn extracted from Stabler (1987: 190) - original source not cited

## The vision and birth of Atlantic College

We would aim to make the boys attending this [college] feel loyal to the common cause of the free world... These colleges could become the source of a movement which would help restore morale throughout the NATO nations<sup>14</sup>.

In the aftermath of two World Wars, the horrors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and in the midst of the increasing threat of the Cold War, Hahn's aims had a strong emotive appeal and, in 1957, eventually found sufficient resonance with an audience at the NATO Defence College in Paris to draw influential support. In Peterson's opinion, Atlantic College was a significant example of Hahn's '*genius for translating his visions, and inspiring others to translate his visions, into action*' (*op.cit*: 3).

In line with Hahn's long-time Platonic belief that a 'healthy pasture' was an essential ingredient for the form of education he proposed, Atlantic College was established in St. Donat's Castle in rural South Wales. The castle was donated by Antonin Besse, one of Hahn's supporters, and was picturesquely located overlooking the Bristol Channel some twenty miles from industrialisation. The association with NATO continued with the appointment of Rear-Admiral Desmond Hoare as the founding headmaster of Atlantic College and when the college opened in 1962 with fifty-six male boarders mainly from Britain, Germany, Scandinavia and North America, his summary of its *raison d'être* echoed Hahn's much postulated vision:

...for the first time, the energies and many sided genius of the nations could be combined in peace instead of being wasted in conflict... education must become more of an integrating and less of a disrupting force... Change by political means is uncertain and slow. The force of example is needed... The Atlantic College Project is aimed at setting this example. The second aim is... to provide a pattern of education suited to the special needs of our time... the educational needs of modern society do not have to be met at the expense of more important human characteristics. The heart of the matter is the need to demonstrate that self-discipline, devotion, imagination, courage and response to challenge can be developed in materially prosperous societies<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> Hahn (1956) 'Four NATO Colleges' extracted from Sutcliffe (1987c: 4)

<sup>15</sup> Hoare extracted from Skidelsky (*op.cit*: 210)

Like Gordonstoun, the timetable at Atlantic College was highly structured and comprised a busy schedule of academic study (originally based on English GCE A Levels), service, physical and creative activities, clubs and societies. A coastal rescue service run by staff and students was established at the college and a short time later, the idea of service to the local community was broadened to include, for example, assistance to the elderly and physically challenged. In its early years, the college played a key role in piloting and developing a new international curriculum, the International Baccalaureate [IB]. In 1971, AC became the first institution in the world to adopt the IB as its sole curriculum (see Chapter Four for further discussion).

### **The expansion**

Since the conception of Atlantic College, there had always been talk of more colleges, but it was Lord Mountbatten's involvement with the project in the late 1960s that gave a new impetus to plans for a worldwide movement (UWCIO 1979). From his newly created position as president of the International Council, Mountbatten insisted on a title which would indicate the project's international aims and, in his '*final contribution to the avoidance of World War III*' (Peterson *op.cit.*: 66), he travelled extensively to promote these aims. His involvement brought new international interest and funding, the creation of an International Board of Directors, an International Office independent of Atlantic College, many more National Committees for the selection of students around the world, and terms on which students and teachers from behind the 'Iron Curtain' were able to come to the duly renamed **United World College of the Atlantic** [AC].

Mountbatten also played a large part in the negotiations concerning the Singapore International School, which adopted 'associate' status to the UWC movement in 1971 and full membership, as the **UWC of South East Asia** [SEA], in 1975. With modern facilities set in a twenty-hectare campus, the school's total enrolment in September 1972 was almost 1200 students aged between eleven and eighteen. Given its status as a private school, native Singaporean students were not permitted to attend SEA due to national government legislation, therefore the school served primarily the expatriate community in Singapore on a fee-paying basis as it had done previously as the

Singapore International School and as it continued to do at the time of this evaluation. Scholarship students selected by UWC National Committees numbered nine in 1972 and were admitted to the final two years of the school only. From its outset the school catered for both boarders and day students.

Meanwhile plans for the **Lester B. Pearson UWC of the Pacific** [PC] were forging ahead. This fully residential college, purpose-built in the style of a village clustered around Pedder Bay on Vancouver Island, opened as a national memorial to Pearson in 1974. In the 1990s, it continued as it began with a two-year programme for a maximum of 200 students admitted between the ages of sixteen and nineteen. All of its students were selected by National Committees around the world and attended the college on a full scholarship basis.

Mountbatten, however, was opposed to development that constituted establishing completely new colleges as he felt this model was limited, not least by financial implications. He encouraged the movement to consider more associations between UWC and schools already in existence. As a consequence, in 1981 - just a few years after Mountbatten had handed over the presidency of UWC to the Prince of Wales - Waterford KaMhlaba School, situated on a hillside overlooking the capital city of Mbabane in Swaziland, became a full member of the UWC movement. Originally established in 1963 as a multi-racial school in open opposition to the apartheid regime in South Africa, the renamed **Waterford KaMhlaba UWC of Southern Africa** [WK] challenged the AC 'model' as SEA had earlier. At the time of data collection, it admitted thirteen to eighteen year olds primarily from the southern regions of Africa as either fee-payers or bursary awardees on a boarding or day student basis. A small number of UWC scholarship students were also admitted to the final two years of the school.

In 1982 two completely new UWCs were founded, the **Armand Hammer UWC of the American West** [AW] in New Mexico and the **UWC of the Adriatic** [AD] in Italy. The former was established in a rural location in the foothills of Northern New Mexico, only eight kilometres from a small local community, but some considerable distance from industrialisation. The latter was a new direction for UWC in terms of

location. AD was established within the bi-cultural Italian/Slovene village of Duino overlooking the Adriatic Sea. Its various facilities were located in existing village buildings including the former guest wing of Duino's castle. Despite their immensely different locations, the two colleges were very similar in the sense that both were fully residential communities of approximately 200 students selected by UWC National Committees and admitted between the ages of sixteen and nineteen for a two year programme of education. However, from the outset AD's admissions policy specified that all students should attend on a full scholarship basis, while at AW, scholarship assistance was provided to meet demonstrated need.

The year 1988 saw a major new initiative in the form of **Simon Bolivar UWC of Agriculture** [SB] established in the foothills of the Venezuelan Andes. At the time of data collection, this residential college made approximately half of its places open to non-Venezuelans; the majority of these places were filled by students from South America and the Caribbean. Students were admitted between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one and were awarded scholarships to study a three-year, post-secondary programme of education including practical training in farm management and rural development. All courses were taught in Spanish and included the study of world policies in agriculture.

The UWC movement continued to expand in the 1990s. The **Li Po Chun UWC of Hong Kong** [LPC] opened in 1992 and the **Red Cross Nordic UWC** [RCN] opened within the course of this evaluation in September 1995. These two colleges emulated the core characteristics of several other UWCs in that they were small residential campus communities that admitted students between the ages of sixteen and nineteen for two years of study. Both were purpose-built in picturesque settings, the former overlooking the Tolo Channel in the New Territories of Hong Kong and the latter nestling on the shores of the Flekke Fjord in mountainous Western Norway. While LPC was located outside the main commercial areas of Hong Kong, it was within easy reach of city life. Conversely RCN, like many of the other UWCs, was relatively isolated. The college was situated ten kilometres from the nearest small town, but, in a new initiative for UWC, established a working partnership with the Red Cross Centre for Rehabilitation and Training. This centre was situated alongside the UWC and



shared many of its facilities with the college. LPC admitted students on a fee-paying, partial or full scholarship basis, while RCN had a full scholarship policy. A tenth college, the **Mahindra UWC of India**, was being built during the course of this evaluation. It opened in September 1997 and replicates the two-year, fully residential model set in a rural location south of Bombay.

### Departures from the founding vision

Undeniably it was Hahn's vision of '*a tough, self-reliant approach to education*'<sup>16</sup> set within a '*physically and spiritually healthy environment*' (Peterson *op.cit.*: 6) that determined to a great extent AC's setting and many aspects of its character and educational programme initially. However, AC worked hard to establish its own identity in its founding years. David Sutcliffe<sup>17</sup> recalled efforts to prove it was not simply an '*international Gordonstoun*' or another Outward Bound School, but established high academic standards, whilst being concerned primarily with the development of human attitudes. The college wished to be known as '*a loyal expression of Kurt Hahn's ideas but not a slavish one... open to many other influences as well*' (Sutcliffe 1983: 89).

Most commentators on the UWC movement have noted some departures from the original vision brought about by either conscious shifts in philosophy or unfulfilled aims. While some of these departures, such as the admission of female students to AC for the first time in 1967<sup>18</sup>, were perhaps inevitable with the passage of time, they were, nevertheless, a significant departure from Hahn's ideas and instigated some considerable debate over matters of principle.

Perhaps the most fundamental departure occurred in the late 1970s as a response to growing concern within the movement about the relevance of Hahn's original aims to the global issues of the time.

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<sup>16</sup> Sutcliffe (1991: 25-27) 'The United World College' in World Yearbook of Education

<sup>17</sup> David Sutcliffe has been involved with UWC since its inception. Before being appointed Headmaster of AC in 1969, he held the college posts of Housemaster, rescue coach, Director of Studies and Deputy Headmaster, as well as academic teaching responsibilities. He went on to be founding Headmaster of AD and Executive Director of the UWC International Secretariat.

<sup>18</sup> Female students were initially admitted to AC as day students only. It was not until 1970 that they were accepted on a fully residential basis

To Hahn... the contribution that the United World College movement could make to world peace and international understanding lay in educating a generation of potential leaders or 'animateurs' at all levels who had understanding and commitment to work for these causes, particularly in international relations... (Peterson *op.cit.*: 168.)

The poverty gap between the developed and developing world and all its ensuing implications had become a much greater concern than the threat of traditional conflict between developed countries which had so concerned Hahn. As part of the debate about how UWC should respond to changing world circumstances, it was agreed that rescue services should no longer be the central focus of the service provision in colleges, but rather a broader interpretation of service should be made in the light of the needs of the community within the locality of each college.

The concept of Simon Bolivar UWC of Agriculture was also born of this debate. As an initiative sought after for some time by certain key figures within UWC, such as the Prince of Wales and Desmond Hoare, the concept of SB created some doubts amongst others within the movement. Aside from the obvious financial and practical implications, there were concerns about the merits of diversifying the form of UWC education to the degree required for this initiative. These apprehensions were ultimately outweighed by the pressing concern that UWC had little to do with '*the real world problems of poverty, repression and strife... the still growing disparity between the very rich and the very poor...*'<sup>19</sup> and hence a new direction for the movement was established. Discourse within UWC has focused on this initiative on many occasions since, but SB has never been replicated and no policy statement was ever made committing UWC to foster similar initiatives in the developing world.

Simon Bolivar UWC provided perhaps the greatest innovation to the developing form and philosophy of UWC, but each of the new UWCs challenged the original vision to some degree. For example, the adoption of an already established school situated on an intensely populated and highly industrialised island certainly challenged Hahn's vision of a 'healthy pasture'. Peterson (*op.cit.*) remembered the way in which the founding of SEA was delayed in an effort to find a site where AC's rescue services could be

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<sup>19</sup> Desmond Hoare (1971) extracted from UWC brochure 'This is UWC' (1996a)

replicated. A suitable site for this purpose was not found and SEA's size, location, funding, student body and service activities made it quite different from the AC model.

WK was welcomed to the movement because its established aims were seen to be almost identical to those of UWC (Petit 1992). This made its adoption quite different from that of SEA. However, as a full secondary school with large numbers of fee-paying students attending on both a boarding and day student basis, WK raised many of the same constitutional issues as SEA. On the subject of WK's proposed UWC membership, Mountbatten insisted that *'if the precedents prevented it, then a new precedent must be set'* (Zieglar 1985: 665).

New precedents were set for the adoption of both SEA and WK, though they have never since been called upon to expand the movement in this direction. At the time of this evaluation, more than twenty years after SEA became a full member of the movement, debate continued concerning the membership of the two schools. However, UWC's administration was keen to point out that this debate occurred almost solely within the UWC graduate community.

PC was established in a remote coastal location with a strong emphasis on rescue services in 1974, but in other ways was considered to be a fresh interpretation of the AC model. Avoiding any resemblance to the English public school that had so inspired Hahn, PC limited its student intake to 200 and emphasised personal relationships and community living. The founding of AD took the UWC movement outside the English-speaking world for the first time and RCN, by means of its working partnership with the Red Cross, associated UWC directly with the philosophies and practice of another organisation.

Other departures were concerned more implicitly with the processes of selecting and educating students. For example, while Hahn was in favour of *'citizens rather than scholars, men of action rather than thinkers'* (Skidelsky 1969: 229), the contemporary movement placed greater emphasis on striking a balance between the cognitive and the affective domains of education. In fact, as discussion in Chapter Three will establish,



the academic achievements of UWC applicants determined to large degree their chances of selection.

Hahn was also convinced of the need for periods of reflective thought, so much so that he assigned time for silence during the school day at Salem in order that the student might ‘*glean the harvest from his manifold experiences*’ (Skidelsky *op.cit.*: 203). It is possible therefore that he would have seen parallels between the furiously busy daily schedules observed in all UWCs in the course of this research and ‘*the nerve exhausting and distracting civilisation*’<sup>20</sup>, of which he was so critical, in the world beyond the school.

The socio-disciplinary structure of AC was another marked departure from Hahn’s ideas. Although, in the college’s early years, all students were expected to wear a uniform and follow a high structured timetable, other formalities, such as the prefectorial system, which Hahn had admired in English public schools and had replicated in Salem and Gordonstoun, were not adopted in AC. In fact, any form of student hierarchy was avoided and an ‘*adult view*’ of social and disciplinary matters was taken, whereby students were given the freedom - ‘*within prescribed limits*’ - to, for example, smoke, drink alcohol and make independent trips away from campus (Sutcliffe 1983: 100). During this evaluation, AC still operated within the same liberal philosophy and other UWCs had in all or some respects followed suit. However, as the findings presented in Chapter Five will illustrate, the national context of each college had an impact on the form of socio-disciplinary structure adopted.

As UWC has evolved, there have been significant departures from Hahn’s principles and founding vision, but there have also been instances where some of Hahn’s original ideas have been returned to. While the selection guidelines have never precluded candidates with physical disabilities, to date only a few have been admitted to the nine colleges. In an effort to rectify this and in a return to Hahn’s interest in the inclusion of the physically challenged, RCN took special measures to encourage their applications and designed its campus for their inclusion. In 1996, RCN admitted a Spanish student and an Egyptian student with physical disabilities.

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<sup>20</sup> Hahn extracted from Sutcliffe, 1986, *op.cit.*

In 1983 Sutcliffe wrote that the movement's 'Notes for Guidance' on selecting students stated that a UWC is not suitable for students with '*intense commitments to a very specific interest*'<sup>21</sup>. Although the IB included an opportunity to pursue a personal research interest in the form of the Extended Essay, the advice contained in these guidelines seemed to restrict Hahn's notion that every student should have a '*grand passion... a consuming interest*' (Skidelsky *op.cit.*: 192). The 'UWC International Selection Guidelines' in use at the time of this evaluation no longer contain this statement; instead they encourage '*a strong interest and expertise in a certain area*' that can be shared with other students (see Appendix VI).

### **The contemporary movement**

At the time of data collection for this evaluation, the UWC movement comprised nine colleges located on four continents, a Network of approximately 18,000 UWC staff, student and graduate members, voluntary committees which dealt with the selection of students in over 100 countries, and various boards, committees, councils and administrative offices (Appendices IV and V). A total of more than 2000 students from over 120 countries were enrolled into the movement's colleges in 1996/97<sup>22</sup> and the annual cost of educating this group approached \$50 million raised from private and public donors (UWCIDO 1996b: 6). Queen Noor of Jordan headed the movement in the role of President of UWC and the former President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, was President of the UWC International Council.

### ***The organisational structure of the contemporary movement***

Structurally, UWC has developed in what has been called an '*ad hoc*' manner prompted by expansion and perceived needs<sup>23</sup> and was, at the time of data collection, undergoing a period of reorganisation. Most changes were driven by a new movement-wide focus on UWC's financial needs and occurred mainly within its central administration. A process of slimming down personnel numbers<sup>24</sup> and redefining

<sup>21</sup> Selection Guidelines extracted from Sutcliffe, 1983, *op.cit.*

<sup>22</sup> This figure refers to the movement's two year IB programme and its programme of agricultural management at SB3 in Venezuela

<sup>23</sup> Jeremy Varcoe, former UWC Director General (recorded discussion, March 1995)

<sup>24</sup> This process included an end to the posts of Director General and Company Secretary

responsibilities resulted in the movement's administration becoming smaller and almost solely focused on fund-raising.

Other changes were motivated by internal disagreements over the mechanisms and control of central decision-making. The traditional corporate structure initiated by Mountbatten had been the subject of mounting criticism within the contemporary movement on the grounds, for example, that decision-making about the movement's direction was neither transparent nor democratic. The '*organogram*' published in the 'UWC Review 96/97' portrayed a new structural image (Appendix IV) and certain gestures were being made to move from the long-standing hierarchical configuration and conventional corporate dynamics to, what the Review described as, a '*multi-dimensional*' and '*non-hierarchical*' organisation (p.26). For example, the movement's growth and direction had been controlled mainly by individuals who supported the concept of UWC, but who often had little to do with the educational experience itself. In a response to calls for more relevant perspectives on the movement's decision-making<sup>25</sup>, the membership of its International and Executive Boards was reviewed in order to include some heads of colleges and some UWC graduates.

During the course of this evaluation, UWC continued to expand its educational activities by establishing two new colleges in Norway and India. Like all UWCs, these colleges had their own governing bodies and, within the deliberately broad specifications of the *UWC Guidelines*<sup>26</sup> (Appendices I and III), had the freedom to develop an institution best suited to the national climate in which they were situated. The autonomy of each college in this respect was considered fundamental to the movement's constitution and was acknowledged, for example, by giving the Chairman of the Board of Governors of each college an *ex-officio* role in movement decision-making in the form of a seat on UWC's International and Executive Boards.

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<sup>25</sup> At the time of the evaluation, the movement's colleges were using their leverage as '*paymasters*' for UWC's boards and committees to ensure that their objections to the movement being run almost exclusively by bureaucrats were responded to

<sup>26</sup> The UWC Guidelines was an internal document described as '*... a guide to the organisation and standard operating procedures of UWC as approved by the UWC International Board*'. The document was first approved in 1983 and had been reviewed and amended since that time.

### ***The direction and rationale of the contemporary movement***

Officially represented by the movement's Guidelines and the UWC Mission<sup>27</sup> (Appendix II), the overall direction and rationale of the movement at the end of the twentieth century remained true to its founding principles. This allegiance was evident in the practical requisites specified for colleges. For example, each UWC was expected to provide '*a genuinely international curriculum*', '*an integrated and challenging programme of social and community service*', and programmes of '*outdoor activities and adventure*' and of '*artistic and cultural activities*'. In addition, it was specified that colleges should have, '*a substantial scheme of scholarships*', '*a significant core of [their] student population... in residential accommodation*', and '*a significantly international student body and, so far as practicable, teaching staff*'. However, constitutional and promotional documents stressed that it was neither institutional form nor educational methods that defined and unified UWC primarily, rather it was a set of shared ideals:

The movement embraces schools and colleges that differ widely in institutional type; uniformity in this sense is less significant than the strength of shared commitment to UWC's ideals as demonstrated in the educational practice of each institution.

(UWC Guidelines 1983: 11)

UWC's ideals were broadly stated in the movement's philosophy (Appendix I) and its mission (Appendix II) as international '*cooperation*', '*peace*', '*justice*' and '*understanding*'. Although the orientation of these ideals had changed from '*freedom and democracy on Western terms*' to a more global perspective (Sutcliffe 1987b: 2), they were also ideals that had constituted the *raison d'être* for this educational venture since the conception of AC, and their coherence, which was echoed in the title of the movement, stemmed from the founding aspiration to '*unite nations and peoples*'<sup>28</sup>. As UWC's former Director General commented:

What UWC is really about has never and will never change. Our commitment to inter-cultural tolerance and understanding is what has always driven the movement onwards.

(Recorded discussion, March 1995)

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<sup>27</sup> The UWC Mission has been in circulation since 1991. At the time of this evaluation's data collection, it was used most extensively in publications designed to raise funds and to inform prospective students

<sup>28</sup> UWC Guidelines (1983: 3)

By focusing on the movement's ideals as the key defining and unifying factor, the official documents of the modern day movement appeared to avoid any rigid sense of identity from which it would be difficult for UWC to innovate or expand. However, this scope for interpretation and the existing variations in form, policy and practice amongst UWCs raised questions about where ultimate boundaries lay if UWC was to maintain a sense of unity and collective identity.

How widely can the river run whilst retaining the depth to flow strongly and with banks high enough to preserve its sense of identity? (Sutcliffe 1983: 117)

The question '*Who/what are we?*' has been an important part of the movement's internal discourse throughout its evolution. While some within the movement have argued that UWC is becoming '*the guardian of a fixed model*'<sup>29</sup>, others have contended that the fear of too broad an interpretation of the UWC concept is not rooted in the desire to preserve a fixed model, but in a concern to avoid compromising the movement's ideals. Throughout the duration of this evaluation, debates concerning UWC's direction and rationale continued, particularly with respect to the lack of conformity in student selection and scholarship policies (see Chapter Three).

### ***The social purpose of the contemporary movement***

The UWC Guidelines (1983: 3) stated that its colleges brought '*young people of all nations together... to develop... their highest intellectual and aesthetic potential*', but this and other documentation also left one in no doubt that UWCs constituted education with a social purpose. The same Guidelines referred to the movement's one overall '*aim*' - '*to make education an active force to unite nations and people*' - and UWC's Mission stated that it was through the combination of '*international education, shared experience and community service*' that its colleges '*encourage young people to become responsible citizens, politically and environmentally aware, committed the ideals of peace, justice, understanding and cooperation*'.

However, this confidence in the capacity of education to improve society was also tempered by some considerable caution:

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<sup>29</sup> Extracted from a paper presented to UWC's International Council in April, 1989 (originally presented to UWC by Peter Jolley in 1974)

There are no specific social goals, because we just couldn't impose them. We expect our graduates to set their own goals within a framework of contributing towards the general welfare of humanity.

(Chairman of UWC's International Board, recorded discussion, January 1997)

Like Hahn, the modern day movement did not associate itself with specific models of the future, nor did it specify the roles that those educated in UWCs should play in its aspirations for the future. This caution was perhaps most evident in the statement: '*The UWC movement is not a political but an educational venture. We seek not to promote... any particular ideology or transitory political cause*' (UWC Guidelines, 1983: 3). Driven by a concern to avoid the educational taboo, indoctrination, UWC distinguished itself from social movements that rally collective action for specific political and social causes. However, achieving this distinction left the movement i) inferring that the orientation of its aims were politically and ideologically neutral by virtue of their educative nature and, as the findings presented later in this thesis will establish, ii) unsure of how to measure its own success.

### ***The global context in which the contemporary movement functions***

The world in which UWC operated at the end of the twentieth century had changed dramatically from that in which it was founded. Technological revolution, environmental crisis, the growing gap between the rich and the poor, the appeal and challenge of free-market capitalism, and the globalisation of consumption, production, politics and the exchange of information are just some of the world developments with which the modern day movement had to concern itself. The ways in which UWC was responding to these changes were evident in the contemporary character and activities of the movement. As research findings presented in this thesis will demonstrate, far broader and more complex notions of citizenship and a united world had evolved in order to maintain the relevance of UWC aims for the contemporary world. For example, environmental awareness became a key educational objective for UWC; it was referred to in the movement's Mission, was added to its educational programmes, and became the specialisation of one of the newest UWCs, RCN.

However, educational objectives and the concepts underpinning them were not the only aspects of the movement in which the influence of a changing world was evident. Global recession and the intensification of market competition have perhaps made the most pressing demands on the modern day movement. The state of global economic climates in the 1990s made the task of raising the substantial amounts of money required to fund students' scholarships, the movement's administration, Student Selection Committees and new colleges increasingly difficult. Some long-standing financial donors, such as Local Education Authorities in Britain, reluctantly withdrew their support and the movement as a whole had to rethink its approach to fund-raising.

Until this time, the responsibility for raising funds had been assumed almost exclusively by the colleges and the National Committees. However, there were concerns that this was a fragmented approach, which had become increasingly inefficient and divisive in the sense that colleges and committees were competing for limited funding with not only external rivals, but also one another. In response to these problems, the limited resources of UWC's newly rationalised central administration were redirected almost exclusively to developing a movement-wide cooperative effort to promote UWC and raise funds. As a consequence, the evaluation's data was rich with evidence of the implications of this new emphasis on marketing UWC.

Concern to preserve the ideological integrity of UWC from the product-orientated *modus operandi* of the marketing world was particularly evident:

In the midst of all this activity, in which fund-raising and public relations must play so important a part, we shall, I trust, not forget that the linchpin of all our endeavours lies in idealism. (Sutcliffe, 12th. International Council Meeting 1995<sup>30</sup>)

However, despite this concern, the financial survival of UWC appeared to be driving intensified efforts to identify tangible and delineated products of UWC education, as well as renewed endeavours to establish UWC's uniqueness within the world of international education:

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<sup>30</sup> United World Journal (1996: 9)

We will only thrive and grow if we have more evidence of the impact our graduates are having out there, otherwise we will not get the sponsorship. (RCN Head)

United World Colleges is the only global educational institution created to educate young people at a pre-university age, which brings together scholarship students from all corners of the globe. (UWCIDO 1996b)

### ***UWC within the ambiguous context of international education***

Hahn's initiative in bi-national education at Salem was virtually unique in the period between the two world wars. The only other similar ventures at this time were the International School of Geneva and the Yokohama International School in Tokyo. However, by the time Atlantic College opened, the terms 'international school' and 'international education' were commonly used to describe a diverse group of institutions and types of education. Since the early 1960s, the number of institutions around the world that call themselves international schools has increased from approximately fifty (Knight and Leach 1964) to an estimated number in excess of one thousand (Hayden and Thompson 2000). Within this group there are institutions such as national schools abroad established to serve expatriates, schools with 'internationalised' curricula designed to strengthen vocational skills for international business, and more ideologically oriented ventures aimed at educating for international cooperation and peace.

Since AC's beginnings, UWCs have featured continually in attempts to distinguish between types of international school (Leach 1969; Sanderson 1981; Fox 1985; Pönisch 1987; Matthews 1988; Samaranayake 1991; Hill 1993). In the process, international schools have been divided into as many as seven categories (e.g. Samaranayake 1991: 28)<sup>31</sup> and UWCs have been described as, for example, '*a liberal form of unilateral internationalism*' (Leach 1969: 42)<sup>32</sup> and '*ideology-driven*' as opposed to '*market-driven*' (Matthews 1988: 12)<sup>33</sup>. Student intake, staffing, location and funding have been some of the characteristics used to categorise international

<sup>31</sup> I.e. Missionary Schools, Proprietary Schools, Company Schools, Overseas Schools, Government Operated Schools for an International Clientele, Inter-Governmental Schools, and International Independent Schools. Samaranayake classified UWCs in the final category.

<sup>32</sup> A classification of AC made on the basis that the college's staff and governing body were predominately British and that the college at that time still prepared its students for GCE A Level examinations

<sup>33</sup> Matthews categorised SEA and WK as '*market-driven*' due to the large number of local fee-paying students admitted by each of these UWCs



schools, but only very limited consideration has been given to the nature of educational experiences in these institutions.

Today UWCs continue to function amidst broadly interpreted and poorly defined concepts of the international school and international education. The implications of these circumstances for contemporary studies of international education were considered in Chapter One and have, as stated therein, influenced the approach taken towards this evaluation. However, the ambiguity in this field has also had a telling influence upon the UWC itself. During this evaluation, the movement continued to struggle with the need to identify itself and its achievements by distinguishing them from others, not only for the purpose of marketing its enterprise, but also for the purpose of maintaining its sense of collective identity.

### **Concluding comments**

From Hahn's aspirations for education within the 'Atlantic Community', an international movement has evolved. However, it was clear that UWC's development constituted more than corporate expansion. The contemporary movement acknowledged its debt to Kurt Hahn for its initiation, for his insight (particularly concerning service learning) and for his contribution as a continuing source of inspiration<sup>34</sup>, but, as this historical analysis has demonstrated, his ideas were not considered doctrines. While discussion in this chapter has established that UWC's direction and rationale did not appear to have changed fundamentally since its first college was founded, it has also begun to demonstrate how the movement's form and activities were influenced not only by its founding principles, but also by changing social, political, economic and environmental circumstances, as well as the practice of education itself.

Although UWCs have been thought of as part of a relatively small group of schools which promote ideologically oriented international education (Sanderson 1981; Matthews 1989a), the dearth of empirical research on the nature and influence of international education has left UWCs, like other institutions and education in this

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<sup>34</sup> Points made by Sutcliffe 1986, *op.cit.*

field, in an ambiguous context, which, in effect, has acted as obstacle to development. This chapter provides the foundations for a more meaningful investigation of international education by considering not only what can be observed about the initiation and development of this educational venture, but by beginning to uncover its significance for some of those involved in this process.

## Chapter Three

### The Selection of UWC Students

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#### **The focus of investigation into UWC student selection**

Data collection concerning the selection of UWC students was directed by the evaluation's purpose and the findings of its preliminary investigation. As a result, the composition of student populations in each of the colleges and the considerable emphasis placed on selecting the '*right*' kind of young people for this educational opportunity were explored with the intention of establishing the significance of student selection for college learning experiences and their influence. Although the legitimacy, consistency and quality of UWC student selection around the world were found to be much debated within the movement, they are only referred to in the discussion that follows where relevant to the foci of this study and would merit more thorough and independent investigation.

#### **The sources of evidence concerning selection**

Research data concerning student selection originated from i) student, graduate and staff interviews, ii) interviews with seven representatives of UWC National Selection Committees<sup>1</sup>, iii) observations of selection interviews at AC, iv) observations of a meeting for the selection of internal candidates at WK, v) student questionnaire responses, and vi) documentary evidence (e.g. selection guidelines and application forms). The findings of the UWC 'Network Survey' administered to all national Networks and Selection Committees in 1992 were also referred to<sup>2</sup>.

Given that student and graduate interviewees and student questionnaire respondents involved in this research were broadly representative of the variety of nationalities found within the movement, the findings discussed here relate to UWC selection procedures in a wide variety of countries. The majority of students and graduates involved in this research had been selected for a place at a UWC by National Committees or similar agencies representing UWC in their countries of residence or

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<sup>1</sup> Voluntary Committees responsible for the selection of UWC students in more than 100 countries. These committees are accountable to the movement's central administration and its official Selection Guidelines. See Appendix V for further details of National Selection Committees

<sup>2</sup> The Network Survey received 12 national responses from approximately 80 countries

origin; only a minority of those involved had been admitted by direct application to individual colleges. This weighting is representative of movement-wide selection procedures.

### **A history of selective entry to UWCs**

The UWC movement has never claimed to provide an education for all. From its beginnings, college admissions constituted select groups of young people considered most capable of promoting the movement's ideals. Stabler (1987: 213) recorded that AC's first admissions were '*carefully selected boys*' and Peterson (1987: 5) revealed the vein of intellectual and social elitism running through UWC's selection policy:

If students were to become 'multipliers' [of the movement's ideals and educational institutions] - people who in their middle years might be expected to have an influence in their own countries - they should clearly be drawn from those destined for higher education.

As subsequent discussion in this chapter will illustrate, the Platonic ideal of selecting and training future leaders, advocated by Hahn and still clearly articulated in UWC's promotional material, has been a contentious subject throughout the movement's evolution and has obtained its colleges the label of '*international Etons*'. At the time of this evaluation, demand for UWC places far exceeded the supply and entry to the movement's colleges was no less selective. Long-standing criteria for the selection of students had been compiled as '*guidelines*' for student selectors and required consideration of a candidate's intellect, character, health, values, and personal pursuits. The Chairman of the movement's International Board summarised the overall rationale for UWC's approach towards student selection:

We want to have an impact on the world, so we are looking for excellence in admissions.

(Recorded discussion, January 1997)

### **Student selectors**

The majority of UWC students were selected by voluntary committees ('National Committees') or agencies representing UWC in their country of residence or origin;

however, SEA, WK, LPC, AW and AC also considered some direct applications<sup>3</sup>. Data collected during this evaluation indicated that panels responsible for selecting amongst direct applicants usually comprised individuals internal to each respective college. For example, the three member panel responsible for interviewing and selecting amongst direct applicants to AC in 1996 consisted of the college's head, a member of its teaching staff and one of its graduates<sup>4</sup>.

Although National Committees were also responsible for electing their own members and officials, UWC recommended that the committees were '*composed largely of independent individuals drawn from a broad cross-section of national life*' (UWC Guidelines 1983: 17), plus some representatives of the UWC Network<sup>5</sup>. However, in a revised version of the movement's policy and guidance on student selection (the 'UWC International Selection Guidelines' - see Appendix VI), the advice was that UWC graduates should be involved in selection procedures '*as much as possible to take advantage of their detailed knowledge of College life and the UWC movement's aims*' (3.3). Drawing on students' recollections of their selection and information provided by those involved in national and regional selection, it appeared that, in line with this advice, some selection committees were made up of UWC graduates almost exclusively.

### **UWC requirements for the composition of its colleges' student intake**

As stated in Chapter Two, the UWC Guidelines stipulated that all UWCs should share the following features: '*a significantly international student body... be fully co-educational... a substantial scheme of scholarships*' and '*a significant core of the student body ...in residential accommodation*' (pp.11-12). In most instances, data indicated that the eight UWCs involved in this evaluation broadly complied with these requirements. Table I overleaf displays the statistics relevant to these UWC requirements for a single annual intake of students across the movement.

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<sup>3</sup> The term 'Selection Committee' will be used to refer to student selection panels generally, while the term 'National Committee' will be used to refer specifically to voluntary student selection panels responsible for selecting students for various UWCs globally

<sup>4</sup> At AC, applicants generally spent at least one night at the college. During their stay, the students who acted as their hosts were asked to form opinions of each applicant. These opinions were considered by the panel in final selection decisions.

<sup>5</sup> An association of students, graduates and staff of all UWCs (see Appendix V for further details)

**Table I**  
**College statistics for 1995 student admissions<sup>6</sup>**

	AC	AD	AW	LPC	PC	RCN	SEA	WK*	UWC Total
<b>Total student admissions</b>	183	100	101	119	97	95	187	82	965
<b>World Regions</b> (based on UWC categorisations)									
Africa	12	7	11	5	14	11	3	53	116
Asia	27	8	10	74	17	12	77	2	227
Australasia	2	2	2	4	2	1	15	-	28
Caribbean & Latin America	15	5	17	7	11	9	1	1	66
Eastern and Central Europe	14	26	8	2	9	14	1	-	74
North America	8	4	26	6	22	4	8	4	82
Middle East	3	4	6	3	5	4	3	1	29
North Africa	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Western Europe	102	43	21	18	17	40	79	21	341
<b>Sex</b>									
Female	107	56	50	76	54	49	96	37	525
Male	76	44	51	43	43	46	91	45	439
<b>Fees status</b>									
Full/partial scholarship <sup>7</sup>	161	100	95	109	97	94	11	44	711
No scholarship	22	-	6	10	-	1	176	38	253
<b>Resident?</b>									
Boarder/partial boarder <sup>8</sup>	183	100	101	119	97	95	40	74	809
Day student	-	-	-	-	-	-	147	8	155

\* WK admissions at January 1995

### ***The international character of student intake***

As part of a study of international schools and international education, Leach (1969) commented directly on the prospects of the UWC movement and its aims; he believed that if they were to nurture unbiased international understanding, then they must avoid any one nation dominating the educational experience they offered. Although the movement had increased the international mix of its college communities considerably since that time, Leach's ideal of wholly '*multi-lateral*' international education was considered somewhat unrealistic and undesirable aspiration for UWCs. Referring to the

<sup>6</sup> Figures based on student lists issued to the research project by individual colleges in 1995

<sup>7</sup> Only some colleges were able to provide figures which indicated the amount received by partial scholarship awardees. Their figures indicated that partial scholarships ranged from 75% to 10% of college fees.

<sup>8</sup> A small number of local Welsh students at AC board on a part-time basis

report of a UWC Conference held in 1978, Peterson (*op.cit*: 170) recalled a discussion concerning student intake for the proposed college in Venezuela and the decision that *'No individual college can be truly international: it is bound to - and it should - reflect its own regional location. Therefore an overall geographical and political balance has to be sought in the project as a whole'*. At the time of this evaluation, colleges were encouraged to offer 20% of their places to students from their own region.

As the figures in Table I illustrate, AC, AD, AW and PC each offered approximately 20% of their places to students from their college's national context in the 1995, while RCN made a broader interpretation of this requirement by admitting approximately 30% of its first student intake from 'Nordic' countries. Due to government restrictions in Singapore, SEA was only able to admit five native Singaporean students in 1995; the majority of its students came from the local expatriate community in Singapore and the Asian region. WK constituted a large proportion of the movement's overall figure for student intake from Africa, though its 1995 admissions included only nine native Swazi students. 50% of LPC's admissions in 1995 came from the local Hong Kong community and most of these students were Hong Kong nationals.

Since the UWC movement began, students from Western Europe have accounted for the highest proportion of its admissions globally. Table I shows that this remained the case in 1995; 35% of the movement's student intake in this year came from Western Europe. However, records showed that the range of student nationalities across the movement had significantly increased over the years and at the time of data collection, colleges were raising funds to admit more students from African countries.

### ***Intra-movement tensions over the composition of student intake***

The composition of certain colleges' student intake was the subject of some tension within the movement. SEA featured most prominently in internal debate over this matter and often prompted the question *'What is a true UWC?'*. Like several other colleges, SEA's student figures were significantly biased towards certain regions of the world, but Table I illustrates that there were two further counts on which SEA did not fully comply with the movement's admission guidelines. Only 27% of the college's IB students admitted in 1995 were resident on campus and only 6% of the same group were awarded full or partial scholarships. Although WK's involvement in the

movement was sometimes debated in the same way as SEA's, the figures in Table I illustrate that WK was far more compliant with these requirements than SEA.

The admission of fee paying students caused most tension across the movement. In this respect, SEA was not the only college subjected to criticism. Although SEA constituted 70% of all fee-paying admissions to the eight colleges involved in this evaluation in 1995, AC, AW, LPC, and WK also accepted some direct entries on a private fee-paying basis.

The movement stated that its '*fundamental principle*' of student selection was the admission of young people from '*the widest possible range of social and cultural backgrounds based on merit alone and irrespective of the family's financial resources*' (UWC Guidelines, *op.cit*: 4). It became clear that although the majority of students admitted across the movement each year were awarded full or partial scholarships, any compromise of the ideal of educational opportunity on the basis of personal merit rather than financial advantage was identified by some<sup>9</sup> as a sign that the movement was abandoning its ideological purity. Tensions over student funding and its implications for the identity of individual colleges and the movement as a whole were unresolved at the time of this evaluation. However, the premise that somewhere sources of funding exist sufficient to provide all UWC students with full scholarships if only the movement set about seeking them more effectively was thought of by some as unrealistic and self-defeating (Sutcliffe 1987b).

### **Official guidance on selection**

The UWC Guidelines outlined a remit for National Committees and other groups responsible for scholarship selection, which was issued along with Selection Guidelines that specify policy, procedures and criteria. UWC's International Development Office (UWCIDO) acknowledged in the Selection Guidelines that '*no single [selection] policy can be applied uniformly throughout the world*' and stated that it expected Selection Committees to '*decide how the spirit of our policies can be best applied in a particular society*'. However, the UWCIDO did stress that the principle of selection on merit alone was not open to interpretation.

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<sup>9</sup> Today most objections to fee-paying entry come from UWC graduates



UWC's central administration required an annual report from each Selection Committee and had distributed a number of surveys in an attempt to gather information on their policies, practices, and membership. However, response rates to these requests for information had been low and therefore neither the colleges nor the movement's administration had detailed knowledge of how selection was conducted in all of the countries involved.

The research data collected by this study indicated that most of the selection procedures experienced by interviewees had been thorough according to the Selection Guidelines and sometimes extensive. But while there were some basic features common to most recent experiences of UWC selection globally, the actual practice of selection appeared to vary significantly between Selection Committees. And in addition, there were some indications of variations from the Selection Guidelines, which appeared to have a number of implications for the movement and its ideals.

### **Variations from 'UWC Selection Procedures'**

Although the Selection Guidelines stated that scholarships should be advertised widely (3.1), more than half of student interviewees reported that they had not become aware of the UWC opportunity via public advertisements. In these cases students had been, for example, actively recruited on the basis of national test scores, nominated because they attended one of a select number of schools regularly approached by the Selection Committee, or notified of the scholarship opportunity by word of mouth.

Of the twelve National Committee responses to the UWC Network Survey and of the seven National Committee representatives interviewed for this research, eight (5 and 3 respectively) sources reported advertising UWC scholarships publicly. Other Selection Committees stated that they could not afford public advertisements and/or were concerned about the overwhelming numbers of applications they would elicit. Nevertheless each of these representatives did express some concern about the likelihood that their current methods of attracting scholarship applications did not allow the UWC opportunity they offered to be open to young people from the widest possible range of social and cultural backgrounds.

### **Variations from ‘UWC Selection Criteria’**

The Selection Guidelines specified nine criteria to be met by applicants for UWC scholarships (Appendix VI). Three of the seven National Committee representatives interviewed for this research stated that they had not seen these official criteria previously. However all seven representatives felt that the grounds on which students were selected by their committees were broadly in line with the criteria. Students and graduates recollections of their UWC selection indicated a variety of practice internationally; their descriptions also illustrated some variations from the official criteria.

### ***English is not an entry requirement***

Research data indicated some differing opinions concerning this criterion amongst those responsible for selection across the movement. It also highlighted selection practices adopted by some colleges and some UWC National Selection Committees that, in actuality, excluded applicants who did not have at least some knowledge of English.

In addition to the fact that all students who completed any UWC application form<sup>10</sup> (with the exception of applications to SB) had to do so in English, Table II overleaf illustrates that 37% of students questionnaired were tested on their English language skills as part of their selection for a UWC place (Q. Item B). The figure 37% constituted 53% of those students questionnaired who stated they were not fluent in English on arrival at their UWC<sup>11</sup>.

Direct applicants to SEA and WK were expected to have a ‘*level of proficiency*’ or a ‘*standard competence*’<sup>12</sup> in English, which was assessed as part of an entrance test<sup>13</sup>. Direct applicants to LPC were asked to grade their competency to read, write and speak English, Chinese and any other language on their application form. Although Hong Kong applicants for UWC scholarships were not asked to grade their language competence on their application form, like direct applicants they were interviewed in English.

<sup>10</sup> All UWC application forms acquired during this research required a full page personal statement/essay to be completed in English

<sup>11</sup> 260 of a total 551 questionnaire respondents stated they were not fluent in English on arrival at their UWC.

<sup>12</sup> Wording extracted from SEA and WK information leaflets respectively.

<sup>13</sup> It was not possible to investigate the level of proficiency required where candidates’ English language skills were assessed.

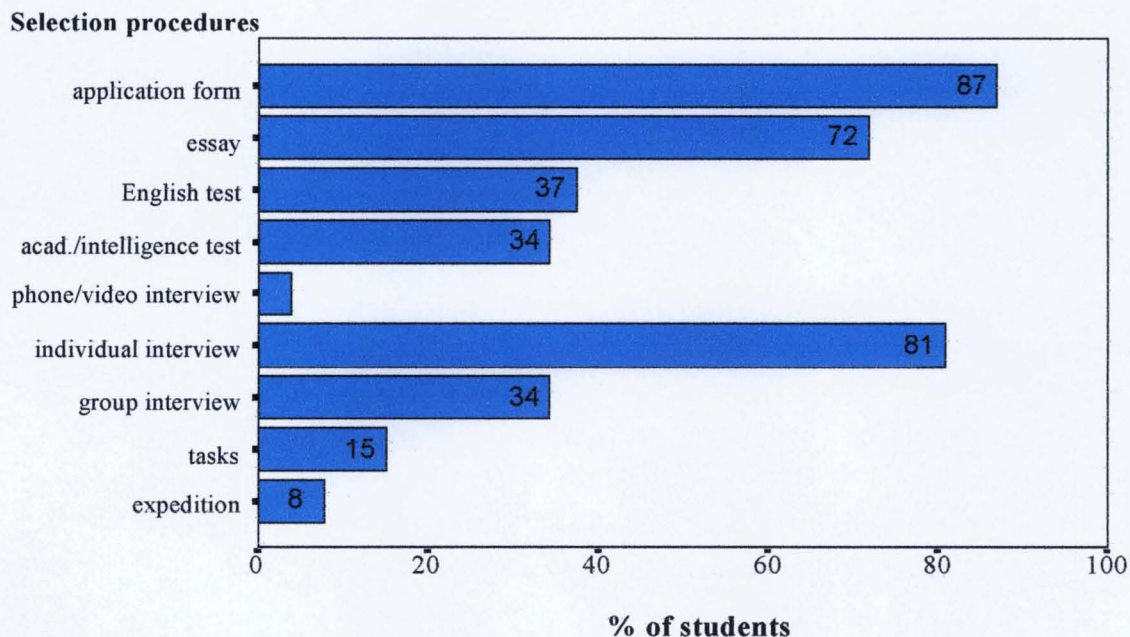
Despite these measures, the Head at LPC stressed:

The Selection Committee does not regard the level of English as a determining factor for entry. Our experience is that the well motivated student with little or no English on arrival copes with the UWC programme.

**Table II**

**The percentage of students questioned who experienced each of a range of selection procedures used in 1994 and 1995 admissions across the movement<sup>14</sup>**

(Q. Item B) N = 551



Five of the seven National Committee representatives interviewed for this research agreed fully with the official criterion regarding English and stated that English competency did not determine selection decisions, however the remaining two representatives were of the opinion that a basic level in English was either necessary or at least, desirable for a successful applicant:

We are doing the student and the colleges a disservice if we send someone without at least some spoken English. (NC-Rep3)

<sup>14</sup> The figures shown in this table represent selection procedures for students admitted as a result of UWC Scholarship applications and direct applications to colleges.

A lack of English language skills doesn't preclude a student from applying and being short listed, but we have used it to make decisions later in the process... you can't tell me that a student with a decent level of English isn't going to get more out of the experience than one who has to focus all his/her attention on learning the language in order to just get by. (NC-Rep7)

In 1995 UWC amended its advice to Selection Committees concerning this criterion. While applications to UWC from candidates with *'little or no English'* remained welcome, Selection Committees were advised to seek students with the *'linguistic ability and the motivation to learn what is the teaching language in all UWC Colleges that offer the IB'* (Selection Guidelines 1995: 4.8). No advice was offered on how linguistic ability or motivation might be assessed. One National Committee representative felt this additional advice appeared to set an extra hurdle for applicants that could impede those with little or no English, who had not had the life or educational opportunities to acquire linguistic knowledge or skills in more than their own language.

Research interviews and student questionnaire responses (Q. Item H1&2) indicated that despite the considerable language difficulties encountered particularly in the first term by some students and their teachers, little or no English on admission to UWC was not ultimately detrimental to the student's UWC experience. In 1987, the Head at AD commented:

... we have increasing and positive experience of students who have arrived here [AD] with no prior knowledge of English at all. To date, no student has left us with a fail in English in the IB, nor have we had a single IB Diploma failure which could be attributed to weaknesses in the English language. (Sutcliffe 1987: 3)

While the research data did suggest there were grounds to consider ways in which difficulties relating to language could be eased for both students and their teachers, these difficulties were not perceived to be a substantial enough influence on a student's full UWC experience to require Selection Committees or colleges to select students on the basis of their competence in English at any stage in the process. In fact, there were numerous indications that students' difficulties in English initiated supportive

behaviour within college communities and supplied important learning experiences in line with the movement's aims for students with and without fluency in English.

### ***Aged 16 or 17 on entry***

This criterion had been a feature of selection policy since the first admissions to AC in 1962. It derived directly from Hahn's belief that the late teenage years were '*the age when idealism is strong and attitudes take root for life*' and had also been associated with Hegal's opinion on this age group:

...the best age for youths to meet with a culture other than their own, the age at which they are sufficiently rooted in their own culture not to risk becoming disorientated, and sufficiently open to learn quickly from the new experience.<sup>15</sup>

However, this was a criterion that the movement applied with a certain degree of flexibility. The Selection Guidelines stated that in '*special cases*' (e.g. refugees) slightly older students may be admitted. Of the student admissions in 1995<sup>16</sup>, 21% were eighteen years old or above. Proportionally most of these students were admitted to AW and WK and represented a broad spread of countries from all world regions. Although there was no statistically significant difference, a slightly larger percentage came from countries in central and southern Africa than any other world region, which may be attributed to the fact that some students from this region had experienced an interrupted education. The eldest student encountered during this research was twenty-one years old on entry to her UWC and due to conflict in her home country, Rwanda, had experienced considerable difficulties in pursuing her education.

Several teachers across the movement articulated some concern about older students (18+ on entry), one commented:

Those few years do seem to make an incredible difference at this age. Our older students are not usually unhappy here, but in some ways they remain on the fringe of things, particularly socially... usually they have a select group of friends from amongst the younger teachers and the more mature students. (AW04MT)

While age and maturity are not always directly linked, limited observation of older students in UWCs, along with analysis of several older students' interviews and

<sup>15</sup> Peterson's (*op.cit.*: 5) reference to the German philosopher, Hegel

<sup>16</sup> Including all 6th. year students at SEA and IB1 students at WK.

journals, generally confirmed this teacher's observation. Clearly this subject would merit more extensive investigation in UWCs, but the data collected during this evaluation offered no evidence that older students' learning experiences were advantaged or disadvantaged by their age.

It was apparent that the flexibility with which this criterion was applied opened the UWC opportunity to a broader range of applicants. It not only allowed for the fact that some applicants' education had been interrupted by their circumstances, but also acknowledged that some did not achieve the level of maturity sought in UWC candidates until later in adolescence.

### **The precedence of certain selection criteria**

Each of the National Committee representatives interviewed stated that in practice some criteria had precedence over others or were used earlier in the process to reduce applications to a short list. Students and graduates recollections of their UWC selection confirmed this finding.

### ***Intellectual ability***

UWC's Selection Guidelines stated that although '*selection should not be for academic potential alone*', the '*rigorous*' nature of the IB required applicants to be of '*a high academic potential*' and '*recommended by their teachers for university*'. The document added that '*students cannot participate fully in College life if they are constantly struggling with their academic work*'. Selection Committees were therefore advised to apply the remaining selection criteria to '*the candidates you feel will handle the range of academic work well*' (4.2).

In accordance with this advice, all seven National Committee representatives interviewed stated that intellectual ability was the first criterion used for short listing applicants for interview. Five of the seven representatives reported that academic achievement in the form of school reports and grades was used as an initial filter to reduce the number of applications to manageable proportions. Although the representatives' comments revealed a clear consensus of opinion concerning the

relative importance and necessary precedence of this criterion, they also illustrated that the thinking underpinning this opinion varied somewhat. For example:

The people who are going to have the most effect upon the world and can actually bring to bear their values in places that matter are those that are high achievers, so academic merit has to be at the forefront of our selections. (NC-Rep4)

It's an absolute requirement. They won't be able to cope unless they are very intellectually capable. We have to pick the best from the outset. (NC-Rep1)

There are some qualities that we cannot assess or fully assess until the interview, so the competition has to begin with what we can assess on paper. We are very proud of the academic calibre of the students we are able to send to the colleges. (NC-Rep7)

However one National Committee representative (a UWC graduate) did say:

I look for the bright ones [candidates], but I'm often wary of those with straight A's. In my experience they're not the best people for the colleges. In these cases I always look through their application form for some evidence that there is a lot more to them than being a brain box. (NC-Rep2)

The UWC Selection Guidelines stressed that candidates should be '*selected for their potential as much as for their achievements*' (4.2). A small number of students and graduates encountered during the course of this evaluation were aware that they had been selected over other candidates with higher academic achievements than themselves. One student recalled:

Afterwards I asked a member of the Committee how I had won the scholarship when there were people with much better grades than me. He said "We were looking for someone special. You will be able to manage the course work, but it was clear you will also take with you more than your intelligence and take away a great deal more than your IB Diploma." (RCN03MC<sup>1</sup>)

But the majority of students selected for their academic potential rather than their prior achievements were those for whom education prior to UWC had been substantially interrupted by circumstances or disadvantaged by limited educational opportunities. These students usually came from developing countries and/or countries involved in conflict and were admitted in small numbers to each UWC. One National Committee

representative summarised what appeared to be a widely held assumption concerning selection on the basis of this criterion:

There is a tendency to think that potential only really needs to be considered in cases where applicants come from very disadvantaged backgrounds. Even in a relatively affluent country like this, there are candidates who are at an advantage because they have had better educational opportunities - better schools, music lessons, ballet classes et cetera. To be fair, potential should be considered in all selection. (NC-Rep2)

In most cases, the research data revealed that candidates' intellectual abilities were assessed on the basis of past achievements and/or predicted grades for forthcoming examinations. Student and graduate interviewees' recollections indicated that some National Committees set minimum academic grades for application entry and others actively sought those who had achieved the highest scores in national tests.

Each of the selection interviews observed at AC began by discussing the examination grade predictions listed by the candidates' teachers on their application form. Candidates were asked whether they thought they would be able to achieve these grades or whether they thought that they might be able to achieve higher grades. The selection meeting for internal applicants to the IB stream observed at WK was an initial stage in the college's selection process designed to short list applicants for interview. The meeting involved staff concerned with each applicant's academic work, CAS activities and, where appropriate, college residency, and dealt with a large number of applications in a limited amount of time. The meeting clearly followed an established format whereby individual teachers called out 'yes' or 'no' in response to an applicant's name. Teachers were invited to comment in a little more detail when an application constituted a '*borderline*' case. Those responsible for the student's academic subjects were asked to respond first and in a significant number of cases, applications were accepted or rejected on academic grounds before any comment had been made on the student's non-academic achievements or potential.

The Acting Head at WK summarised the college's approach to the selection of both internal and external applicants to the IB years:



They are interviewed - we like to have a good feel for the characters that are coming in - but basically we are looking for the academic ability and language skills to cope with the work. (WK Acting Head)

In *'Adventures in High Endeavour'* (the story of PC), it is stated that *'traditional examinations and IQ tests cannot be used for student selection because they may discriminate against racial minorities'* (1982: 22). In fact, 42% of all questionnaired students admitted to PC in 1994 and 1995 had been required to sit an intelligence test as part of the selection process in their respective countries. At the movement-wide level, Table II shows that an intelligence test was part of the UWC selection process for 34% of all students questionnaired. Although the research data revealed that intelligence testing had been used by Selection Committees in all regions of the world, the numbers of questionnaired students tested in this way were much higher in Middle Eastern (86% of all students questionnaired from this region) and Caribbean and Latin American (59% of all students questionnaired from this region) countries.

On the whole, students in each UWC were amongst the top academic achievers in their previous schools or in the lower years of SEA and WK and, as data presented in Chapter Four will demonstrate, the vast majority of UWC students achieved a good or excellent standard in the assessment of their IB examinations. In common with the observations of Hill (1993) and Murphy (1993) and contrary to assumptions articulated in the UWC International Selection Guidelines, this evaluation's data suggested that the academic standard of the IB, even given the curriculum's breadth and the additional demands of college life, appeared to allow considerably more scope to admit students of a broader range of intellectual ability than was the case during the course of this evaluation.

UWC students, teachers, heads and graduates involved in this research supported the need for candidates to be intellectually capable of coping with the academic requirements of the IB as only part of the demands of college life, but there was general agreement that it was not necessary for students to be the *'crème de la crème'* academically. All teacher interviewees without exception made some reference to how rewarding they found the task of teaching students of *'such a high intellectual calibre'*, but some expressed similar reservations about UWC admissions to those articulated by Peter Jolley (a former Head of SEA) in 1974:

For over two hundred years schools reflecting society have divided children by race, colour, creed, wealth and ability and, as one of the two declared aims of UWC is to make education a uniting force, I do not see how we can escape our responsibilities to the less able. Academic achievement is fine, but it has not saved mankind, and the modern man needs a quality of caring and concern built into his life style which mercifully is not the sole preserve of an intellectual elite<sup>17</sup>.

Jolley's argument was much quoted in movement debates concerning the legitimacy of selection procedures and criteria and had been related to concerns over the integrity of the movement's scholarship programme, as well as the long running disputes over fee-paying college admissions. The figures in Table I show that 74% of all students admitted to UWC in 1995 were awarded full or partial scholarships. However, the research data on students' lives prior to UWC generally concurred with a long history of international research, which has established that links exist between socio-economic status and educational opportunity and success (e.g. Bourdieu and Passeron 1977; Knox *et al.* 1993). The Head at AD summed up how, in this respect, egalitarian philosophy underpinning the selection criteria often transpired to be little more than rhetoric:

It tends to be those from the wealthier, more privileged backgrounds who have access to the better educational opportunities and therefore realistically have more chance of winning our scholarships on merit. In the end what is the difference between their access to UWC and that of the fee-payers who get in with good grades?

### ***Personality***

The seven National Committee representatives were unanimous in the view that once intellectual ability had been established, *personality* should take precedence over the remaining criteria. The UWC Selection Guidelines stated that a 'good' candidate should '*appear to be tolerant and adaptable...with integrity and strength of character. Their sense of their own abilities should be balanced with a willingness to cooperate with others.*' (4.5). Each National Committee representative interviewed agreed that

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<sup>17</sup> Extracted from a paper presented to UWC's International Council in April, 1989 (originally presented to UWC by Peter Jolley in 1974)

these were important qualities, but there was an interesting consensus amongst the representatives that above all the best candidates were assertive and confident:

Strength of character is most important - I'm looking for someone who can stand on their own two feet and be heard - a shy, retiring flower would not be right for a UWC.

(NC-Rep7)

We're looking for young people with leadership qualities ... it's the people who show charisma and confidence who usually win the scholarships. (NC-Rep3)

On the whole the people of our country are very conformist, so the people we select for UWCs are never typical of our nationality. They're the animated, assertive types, who stand out in the crowd. (NC-Rep2)

When asked why the best candidates were those with confidence and assertiveness, all of National Committee representatives referred to the need for these qualities if a candidate is to *'fit into'* a UWC. However, five of the seven also stressed that these were necessary qualities if UWC graduates are to *'make a difference in the world'*. There were clear indications throughout this research that, although there was no longer a general expectation that the movement would produce world leaders, Hahn's aim to *'educate a class of leaders'* was still evident (Skidelsky 1969: 185) and moreover, this aim was based on what could be called *western world* perceptions of leadership qualities. Confidence and assertiveness demonstrated visibly and vocally were generally highly valued. A very clear example of the influence of these perceptions on candidate selection was found at the WK selection meeting observed during this evaluation. A brief debate concerning cultural expectations was instigated by an Asian member of staff when there was consensus within the meeting that an Asian student's application was disadvantaged by the fact that he was *'too quiet'*.

Other personal qualities, such as sociability, enthusiasm, idealism and caring were mentioned in most interviews with National Committee representatives and three of the seven stressed the need to find candidates with stamina. One representative commented:

Our selection process is long and we put them through a lot. We have to be able to see that they are the type of people that really could stand up to the UWC experience.

(NC-Rep3)

All of seven National Committee representatives were in agreement that, although a personal statement/essay offered small insights into a candidate's personality, very little concerning this criterion could be assessed on paper. Given this, there were a variety of opinions amongst the representatives about the best means to assess personality.

As Table II illustrates, 81% of all students questionnaired took part in an individual interview as part of their selection and an additional 4% were interviewed over the telephone or on video. All seven National Committee representatives believed that the individual interview was critical to the selection process and offered important insights into a candidate's personality. However, in line with advice offered in the movement's Selection Guidelines, four of the seven representatives felt that an individual interview did not provide sufficient insight alone. Research data established that some Selection Committees used additional activities to observe and assess candidates' personalities and social skills. For example, as part of their selection process, 34% of students questionnaired took part in a group interview or discussion (e.g. on global current affairs), 15% were given tasks to complete individually or in groups (e.g. organising a party, a performance, or a social service activity) and 8% participated in an expedition or outing with other candidates and selectors.

### ***Commitment to UWC aims***

Although the Selection Committees involved in this research looked for idealism in candidates, five of the seven Committee representatives felt it was very difficult to establish whether a candidate was truly *committed* to UWC aims. The UWC Selection Guidelines were found to be confusing on this point. Under the criteria heading '*Commitment to UWC aims*', the Guidelines advised only that Selection Committees establish that candidates *understand* UWC aims.

National Committee representatives felt that it was significantly easier to establish whether a candidate understood UWC aims, than it was to discover whether they were committed to them. National Committee representatives' descriptions of their

procedures included references to various attempts to comply with this criterion. Usually these efforts took the form of indirect questions in interviews or an appraisal of the ideas outlined in the candidates' application statements/essays. However four of the seven representatives stated that involving candidates in group discussions, tasks or expeditions provided the best opportunities to assess candidates' understanding and/or commitment to UWC aims, particularly because they could not be prepared for or anticipated. Although the National Committee representatives interviewed were aware of a variety of motives that might inspire a candidate to apply to UWC, they were confident that the majority of students applied because they felt some commitment to the movement's aims.

### **What motivated candidates to apply to UWC?**

In discussions with students, it became clear there were a range of motives for applying to UWC. Most students interviewed stated that they felt some commitment to, or at least a predisposition towards, UWC aims at the time they applied. Given that both SEA and WK made it clear that they did *'not only admit students with a previously developed commitment to the ideals of the UWC movement'* (SEA brochure 1995: 2), it was not surprising that significantly larger percentages<sup>18</sup> of students who claimed not to feel some commitment to the movement's aims at the time they applied to UWC/the IB years were found in these two colleges than in others<sup>19</sup>. However, this was not a phenomenon exclusive to SEA and WK; there were small numbers of student interviewees in all other UWCs who stated they had not felt a commitment to the UWC aims at the time of application. Furthermore, some of these students had taken part in lengthy selection processes, which appeared to highlight Selection Committees' difficulties with this criterion.

Most students who did feel some commitment to UWC aims at the time of application stated that it was one of a number of reasons they chose to apply. Other reasons stated fell broadly into the following categories, which also cover the motives stated by students who did not feel a commitment to UWC aims at the time they applied:

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<sup>18</sup>  $p = 0.05$  in both cases

<sup>19</sup> Both SEA and WK admitted the majority of their IB students from their lower schools where UWC aims also played a part in their educational programme. It was neither within its remit nor feasible for this research to evaluate the influence of the lower school years in these UWCs, however some IB students in these colleges did associate their commitment to UWC aims with their lower school experiences

- a desire to travel/have an ‘adventure’
- the encouragement of others (e.g. parents, previous teachers, UWC active recruitment)
- the offer of a scholarship
- the prospect of a better/more interesting education
- the opportunity to study the IB Diploma and/or gain access to western higher education
- the desire/need to board (often prompted by the mobility of parental occupation)
- the wish to remain in the same school/with friends from pre-IB education
- the desire/need to learn English

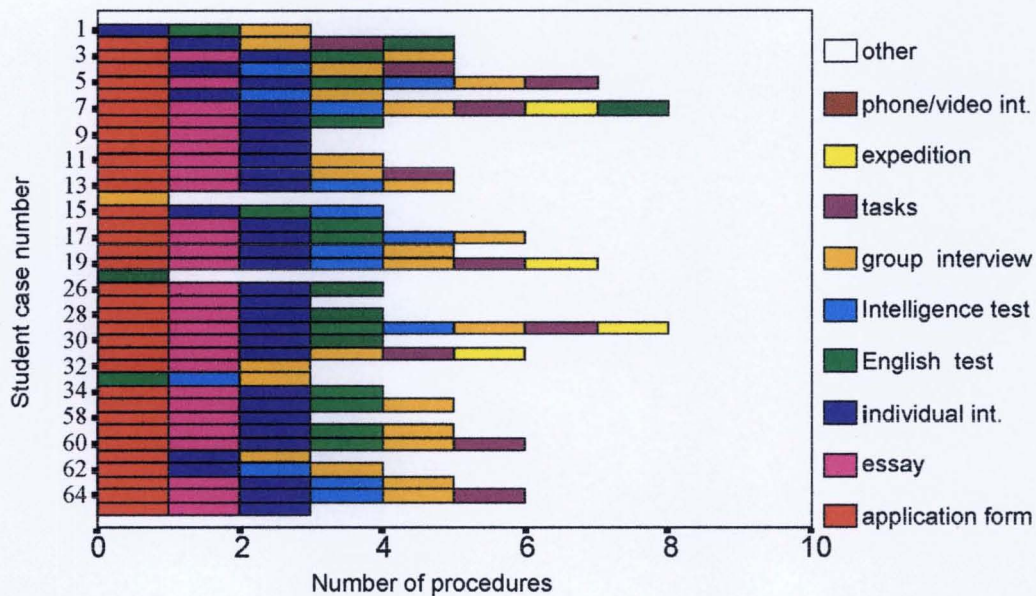
Interview data indicated that often students’ commitment to UWC aims at the time of application was based on long held views, usually related to their families’ value orientation. Some further investigation into applicants’ personal convictions would provide useful insights into not only what motivates applications to UWC and from whom, but the nature of students’ values and attitudes from the outset of their UWC experience.

### **The selection process**

Discussion of the research findings on selection to this point has touched on some of the similarities and differences in the various selection procedures applied around the world. Table III (overleaf) provides a simple illustration of the variety of selection procedures experienced by students admitted to just one college in 1995 (Q. Item B).

In 1994 and 1995, the majority of students across the movement were selected on the basis of an application form, including a personal statement/essay, and at least one individual interview. Tables II and III illustrate that small numbers of students experienced alternative or additional selection practices. In the example of admissions to AD in 1995 (Table III), selection procedures experienced by students internationally ranged from a single requirement (e.g. Student Case 25: a recommendation from the student’s previous school) to up to eight individual requirements (e.g. Student Case 7: requirements listed plus an additional interview at the national embassy).

**Table III**  
**The selection procedures experienced individually within a stratified**  
**sample of the student cohort admitted to AD in 1995 (Q. Item B)**



Research data on student selection collected in WK varied slightly from that collected in the movement's two year IB colleges. It revealed that although UWC Scholars in this college had experienced a variety of selection procedures similar to the range illustrated in Table III, the majority of students admitted to the college's IB years came from its lower school and were required to submit an essay on their personal interests and CAS activities, to take part in an interview and to receive staff recommendations. Meanwhile, the selection process for external applicants admitted directly to WK's IB years involved an application form (including a personal statement), an entrance test and an interview.

However, the picture differed more for admissions to SEA in 1994 and 1995. While their UWC scholars' selection experiences varied in a similar way to those of scholars in other colleges, their internal applicants to the IB years were recommended by staff on the basis of their academic progress alone. External applicants admitted directly to SEA's IB years were required to submit an application form, sit an aptitude test in English and Maths and were invited to visit the college to meet with staff and students<sup>20</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> Although LPC, AC and AW also accepted direct applications, these were considered in the same way as national scholarship applications



### **The notion of an ideal UWC student**

Most students and some graduates interviewed on the subject of selection felt there was a need to standardise procedures internationally, not only to ensure fairer and more democratic access to the UWC opportunity, but also to guarantee the calibre of students admitted. Many students, teachers, graduates and all National Committee representatives involved in this research had some notion of the kind of people who are best suited to the UWC experience, as well as opinions on the selection procedures which would and would not identify such candidates.

Opinions concerning those best suited to the UWC experience seemed to fall into two interrelated categories. Some interviewees focused on the type of people who would ‘fit into’, ‘survive’ or ‘contribute well’ to college life. These interviewees commonly used words such as *confident, mature, sociable, active, well balanced, caring, academically bright, open-minded, tolerant* and *flexible* to describe those most suited to college life. But other interviewees referred more to the qualities needed in students if UWC was to meet its aims:

If it's your ambition to graduate from university and just live life for you and perhaps your family, then a place at UWC is wasted on you. (PC15MG<sup>91</sup>)

There are a minority of people here who, for example, skip service, steal other people's possessions... Ultimately these are not people who are going to get out there and do anything about the world's problems - big or small. (AC07FC<sup>2</sup>)

It has to be someone who is open-minded, tolerant and keen to find out about different people, beliefs and ways of life from the outset. If you bring someone here who's not, then the best that can happen in two years is that a few of their prejudices are challenged. I think UWC is aiming for more than this. (AD02FT)

Twenty-five of the graduates who participated in this research were or had previously been involved in the selection of UWC students. Their descriptions of an ‘*ideal candidate*’ conformed to the qualities stated above. However it was interesting to find that more than half of these graduates felt the ideal candidate also demonstrated a certain ‘*je ne sais quoi*’ which, based on their own UWC experience, they could recognise almost immediately. Although selection decisions made by graduates on this basis raise questions about accountability and concerns that their perceptions of the ‘right type’ may limit the scope of admissions unnecessarily or unfairly, it also



suggests that there may be more to know about the notion of an ‘ideal’ UWC student and the typical characteristics of those candidates selected.

The research data revealed widespread consensus that the UWC experience was not suited to any young person, rather it was thought to require a number of specific personal qualities and values, as well as intellectual ability. Without further investigation, it is difficult to say exactly how such strong consensus concerning the ideal student or candidate had arisen. But whether as a result of the movement’s selection criteria, the college experience itself or perhaps the composition of its selection committees, this ideal did appear to conform to ‘western world’ expectations in certain respects.

### **Identifying the ideal UWC student**

Although most teachers did not feel they had enough insight into selection procedures to comment, many students and graduates interviewed asserted some opinion on methods of selection. Some agreed it was a difficult task, but most felt, based on what they had heard and experienced, that some Selection Committees were doing a more ‘*thorough*’ job than others.

There was general criticism of entry on the basis of academic merit alone. One student commented:

In my country, selection is an academic test and school grades. I like to study and I’m not very sociable... I can only see how unsuited I am for this now that I’m here. (AD09FC<sup>2</sup>)

Like four of the seven National Committee representatives interviewed, most students and graduates favoured lengthy selection processes that assessed candidates’ personal qualities in a variety of contexts:

I think it must be a pretty much hit or miss trying to find a person who can fit into a close knit community like Pearson and face up to all the challenges involved in the two years if only artificial measures like an application form and a panel interview are used. You need to see that person amongst a whole bunch of people they don’t know and in a situation where they need to act on their initiative, and, maybe most important, in a situation where they have to give at their own cost. (PC06FG<sup>76</sup>)

But while the Head at AD acknowledged the considerable efforts of Selection Committees to find the ‘right type’ of students for UWCs, he also pointed out that no matter how thorough selection procedures are, there are no guarantees:

You can try as hard as you like, you can write down guidelines, you can have experienced people on the selection committees and you can still, with the best of intentions, get it all wrong and pick students not suited to or interested in the experience.

### **Preaching to the converted?**

The AW Conference on UWC Goals (1989) called for Selection Committees to examine more closely candidates’ commitment to UWC aims. While many students, graduates and staff involved in this evaluation felt similarly, some interviewees questioned this selection criterion. A National Committee representative commented:

Sometimes you get applicants that are very open to UWC ideas but haven’t encountered them before. I don’t think they should be ruled out. (NC-Rep3)

And a PC graduate previously involved in selecting UWC students recalled:

I remember being very keen to give a scholarship to a boy who was pretty closed-minded, because I thought he stood to gain most from the experience. But I knew my view would not be supported by the rest of the committee, so I went with the majority vote for the idealistic, clean-living type. (PC02FG<sup>76</sup>)

Clearly there are some grounds to ask whether the ‘*closed-minded*’ candidate or the candidate who has not encountered ‘*UWC ideals*’ previously might not be the very candidates who would benefit most from this experience. In response to this idea, three college heads were doubtful whether their colleges could really function in the same way or have the same objectives if they did not require some prior commitment to UWC aims, as well as certain personal qualities. However, many staff and student members of SEA and WK felt that their colleges benefited from an important ‘*shot of realism*’ as a direct result of the fact that their admissions included a wide variety of value perspectives and ‘*more than the odd dissenting voice*’. The Heads of both SEA and WK believed that UWC aims were still feasible, if more challenging, in this context:

I can't deny that it is harder to achieve UWC's Mission when most of our students arrive here more interested in grades and exam results than our ideals, but that is the challenge and that's what education is about. (SEA Head)

The movement's Mission stated that a UWC education '*encourages young people to become responsible citizens, politically and environmentally aware, committed to the ideals of peace, justice, understanding and cooperation*'; however, much of the research data indicated that most candidates selected by UWC National Committees were relatively aware and committed in these ways prior to their arrival at their UWC. Peterson (*op.cit*: 116) and others have expressed the belief that:

To a certain extent the pure classic type [of college] are preaching to the converted, while the other type are doing the converting.

While an *a priori* commitment to UWC aims might be perceived as one safeguard against indoctrination, it appeared that this criterion not only ruled out large numbers of prospective applicants - seemingly those which other criteria targeted – but it also carried implications for the UWC learning experience. The implications of selection on this basis will be discussed further in relation to the post-college experience (Chapter Six) and UWC's culture (Chapter Seven).

### **Concluding comments**

Although a great deal of agreement was identified across the movement about what should be sought in a UWC candidate, a wide variety of procedures were used to select appropriate candidates. Most of the selection procedures experienced by interviewees appeared to have been thorough according to the Selection Guidelines and sometimes, extensive; however, there were some instances of mismatches and inconsistencies within and between selection procedures and criteria, which carried implications for both the composition of each college's student intake and the movement's ideals. For example, the search for proven academic excellence amongst candidates appeared to have resulted in student admissions being biased towards certain categories of society and to have militated against the democratic philosophy of UWC's scholarship policy.

The demand for UWC places far exceeded supply; however, the particular and considerable lengths taken to select amongst UWC candidates revealed that official

selection procedures and criteria originated more substantially from certain deep-seated, long-standing and, on the whole, esoteric assumptions about the UWC venture, than from the need to manage numbers. Undertones of Hahn's belief that '*the leadership of an aristocracy of talent*'<sup>21</sup> could cure certain social ills was still very much evident in contemporary philosophy on UWC selection. As a result, candidates most commonly sought and selected for UWC places were found to have an established record of high academic achievement, to be idealistic, confident, assertive, mature, and sociable, and to have either stated or demonstrated a commitment to UWC aims. In the light of the research findings presented in this chapter, the significance of current selection practice for UWC learning experiences will be considered at various points throughout the remainder of this thesis.

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<sup>21</sup> Skidelsky *op.cit.*: 190

## Chapter Four

### The Role of Academic Study in UWCs

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As previously established, there is some ambiguity not only about what it is to be an international school, but also about what it is to offer an international education. In an attempt to clarify matters, Jonietz (1991: 4) observes that the mission of institutions involved in international education appears to be:

... [to offer] to the international community a high calibre academic programme which focuses on education for global understanding and ends in an internationally recognised diploma.

By pinpointing academic programmes as the defining characteristic of international education, Jonietz effectively excludes a substantial number of schools that cater for the international community, but employ curricula relating solely or predominantly to particular national education systems and not generally designed to meet the international goals referred to (Belle-Isle 1986). Instead her observation appears to focus on a group of schools, which have adopted one or more of a range of widely recognised and respected international curricula<sup>1</sup>: a group of schools to which UWCs belong by virtue of their offering the most established of these curricula, the International Baccalaureate (IB).

This chapter considers the significance of an academic<sup>2</sup> programme in international education by exploring academic learning in the colleges both in relation to UWC's aims and to its significance for the movement's students and graduates.

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<sup>1</sup> e.g. the International Baccalaureate (IB), the IB Middle Years Project (IBMYP), the International Schools Curriculum Project (ISCP), the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE), the Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE), and Advanced Placement (AP)

<sup>2</sup> The word 'academic' is used to refer to the arts and sciences of the formal curriculum, which are studied on a predominantly theoretical basis. The term includes new additions to the IB such as Global Concerns, but excludes subjects without a theoretical base such as Creativity, Action and Service (CAS)

### **The International Baccalaureate**

As previously mentioned in Chapter One, this study was not designed to evaluate the IB programme itself; the brief overview of the IB's development, rationale and format which follows provides a framework for subsequent discussion of its consistency with UWC aims and its use and influence in the eight colleges studied.

#### ***The IB's development and rationale***

The concept of an international secondary school curriculum culminating in an international university entry qualification first arose prior to the Second World War, but the idea was not revived until 1948. The International School of Geneva founded the International Schools Association (ISA) in 1951 and orchestrated the first stages of the initiative. The association's aims were both practical and idealistic. The stated rationale for an international curriculum and qualification was to offer a broad and balanced education, which not only facilitated student mobility in international secondary education and university entry, but also promoted international understanding in an increasingly interdependent world (Peterson 1972).

AC regarded the English A Level syllabi and qualifications inadequate to meet both the needs of their multi-national student body and the college's aims; consequently in 1963, the college joined forces with the ISA in support of the IB initiative. Although AC was founded too late to influence early decision-making regarding the IB, it became a '*field laboratory*' for the new curriculum and its examinations and, in 1971, it was the first institution in the world to abandon a national qualification in favour of an international diploma (Sutcliffe 1983: 94).

Running alongside work to develop and trial the curriculum and its examinations were efforts to convince parents, universities and national ministries of education that holders of the new diploma would be comparable to those who had achieved success in national pre-university examinations. By 1973, twenty countries formally recognised the diploma, and graduates of the IB were attending 175 different universities in twenty-five countries (Peterson 1987). Today the IB is the longest standing and most well established of a range of international curricula currently offered in schools globally. Some 630 schools in eighty-five countries offered the IB at the time of this evaluation's data collection (International Baccalaureate Organisation [IBO] 1996a)

and, according to unofficial IBO figures issued to this research project, IB graduates were admitted to universities in over ninety countries in 1997. Indeed, some graduates were given advanced placement and/or standing in some institutions of higher education.

### ***The IB's format***

Alec Peterson's<sup>3</sup> influence upon the diploma's format was substantial, not least in relation to the number of subjects studied by students (Hill 1993). Critical of the narrow specialisation required by the British A Level system, he proposed that the IB Diploma comprised a broader range of subjects and activities. This proposal resulted in a programme that required full diploma candidates to study six subjects across the academic disciplines.

At the time of data collection, the IBO (1996a: 2) described the IB curriculum as '*a rigorous pre-university course of studies*' for students between the ages of sixteen and nineteen. It stated that the two year diploma model was '*based on the pattern of no single country but incorporates the best elements of many*'. In order to '*ensure the science-oriented student is challenged to learn a foreign language and the natural linguist become familiar with laboratory procedures*' (p.4), it required that diploma candidates select one subject from each of the six academic areas below:

#### **Group 1: Language A1**

(First language) including the study of selections from World Literature

#### **Group 2: Language A2, B, ab initio**

Second modern language

#### **Group 3: Humanities**

History, Geography, Economics, Philosophy, Psychology, Social Anthropology, Business and Organisation, Information Technology in a Global Society

#### **Group 4: Experimental Sciences**

Biology, Chemistry, Applied Chemistry, Physics, Environmental Systems, Design Technology

#### **Group 5: Mathematics**

Mathematics HL, Mathematical Studies, Mathematical Methods, Advanced Mathematics SL

#### **Group 6: The Arts and Electives**

Art/Design, Music, Theatre Arts, Latin, Classical Greek, Computer Science, a third modern language, a second subject from Groups 3 or 4, Advanced Mathematics SL, a school based syllabus approved by the IBO

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<sup>3</sup> Alec Peterson was first involved with the development of the IB in his post as Director of the Department of Educational Studies at Oxford University. He took a sabbatical from this post in 1967 to become the first Director-General of the International Baccalaureate Office [now 'Organisation']

At least three and no more than four of the student's chosen subjects were studied at 'higher level' [HL] (a minimum of 240 teaching hours over two years), while the remainder were studied at 'subsidiary' or 'standard level' [SL] (a minimum of 150 teaching hours over two years). Institutions could choose to provide any of the subjects from Groups Three to Six in English, Spanish and/or French and students could elect to write their examination papers in any of these languages.

In addition to the study of six academic subjects, diploma candidates had to submit an '**Extended Essay**' of some 4000 words. This component required that each student conducted an '*original*' piece of research on one of fifty-seven subjects examined. It was intended to provide students with the opportunity to develop '*a personal academic interest creatively and autonomously, while at the same time practising the self-discipline... that independent research of this kind demands.*' (Fox 1998:68).

To avoid the study of subjects in '*watertight compartments*' and to provide a '*unifying and reflective element*'<sup>4</sup> within the IB, all students also followed a course called '**The Theory of Knowledge**' [ToK] for a minimum of 100 teaching hours over the two-year period. Its approach was essentially philosophical and encouraged students to question the nature and content of the subjects they studied. Originally this course was not assessed formally, but, at the time of data collection, students were required to submit two essays for internal assessment (subject to external moderation), which contributed to their overall diploma score through the award of 'bonus points'.

Finally, in addition to the academic programme, the IB curriculum included '**Creativity, Action and Service**' [CAS]. This component was designed to encourage students to '*reach beyond themselves and their books*' and foster '*compassionate citizenry*' (IBO 1996a:3). It involved students in experiential learning in the arts, physical fitness, and community/social service for at least three to four hours a week (a minimum of 150 hours over two years). The evaluation's findings relating to this component of the IB are discussed in Chapter Five.

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<sup>4</sup> Peterson (1987: 47-48)



### ***IB assessment***

The grading of a student's IB Diploma was determined by a range of assessment procedures. External examination on the basis of a criterion-referenced grading system was the principal means of assessment. Written examinations at the end of the two-year period carried most weight in the final assessment of each academic course, but course work assessment and oral assessment also contributed. The methods of assessment and the distribution of marks varied between courses, but approximately 20% of marks were given to course work in most subjects and as much as 30% of marks were awarded to oral assessment (Language A1). Students' CAS performance was assessed internally by means of self-evaluation and staff evaluation using defined IB performance criteria. On the basis of these evaluations, schools and colleges were required to advise their regional IB office whether students had successfully completed the CAS requirement.

Although the IB syllabi were devised and reviewed mainly within Europe, 2600 examiners were recruited globally to process the May (Northern Hemisphere) and November (Southern Hemisphere) examination papers in 1996. Each examined subject was graded on a scale of one to seven and the diploma was awarded to students who achieved a minimum aggregate total of twenty-four points in addition to the successful completion of the Extended Essay, the ToK course and CAS requirements. The maximum score any student could achieve was forty-five points (including any bonus points awarded). In 1997 there was a 79% diploma pass rate globally<sup>5</sup>. Those students who failed to meet the minimum aggregate score or who elected to take less than six subjects were awarded individual certificates for examinations completed.

### **The IB in UWCs**

All students<sup>6</sup> in the eight UWCs involved in this evaluation studied for the IB Diploma or IB Certificates. The framework of the IB allows educational institutions the freedom to develop programmes to suit their own circumstances and therefore the range of subjects and activities on offer in any one institution may vary from another. Just as Sutcliffe reflected in 1983 that '*the finally agreed framework of the IB suited us [AC]*

<sup>5</sup> Unofficial figure issued to this research project by the IBO in March 1997

<sup>6</sup> i.e. all students in the two-year IB colleges and those students in the 'IB Years' at WK and the '6th. and 7th. Years' at SEA

well' (p.94), the findings of this evaluation revealed that the organisation, structure and content of the IB received a generally favourable review in UWCs.

### ***The organisation, structure and content of the IB academic programme***

During the period of data collection, the range of academic subjects on offer to students in most UWCs was similar in number (on average 3/4 subjects in each of the Groups One to Five, 0-3 subjects in Group Six); however, the two largest colleges (in terms of IB students) - AC and SEA - were able to provide approximately 30% more subject choices overall. All of the eight colleges studied offered the conventional academic disciplines and at least one subject more commonly associated with the term 'international education', such as Environmental Systems (all UWCs), World Cultures (AD), World Religions (AC), Peace and Conflict Studies (AC), Development Studies (RCN), Chinese Studies (AC, LPC), and Science, Technology and Social Change (SEA)<sup>7</sup>.

In most cases, students were generally satisfied with the options that had been made available to them and the conventional timetabled format within which they studied their chosen academic subjects with individual subject teachers over the period of two years<sup>8</sup>. College timetables were varied and complex, accommodating not only the broad academic programme and a wide range of CAS activities, but also events such as college meetings, debates, performances, tutorials, and personal study periods.

On the whole, academic teaching sessions ran through the morning and into the early afternoon from Monday to Friday (prior to this evaluation, WK also had Saturday morning classes in academic subjects). For the remainder of the afternoon students usually participated in CAS activities, tutorials or private study. In some colleges, a small amount of academic teaching resumed in the early evening, but more commonly non-academic activities continued through the evening (and some of the weekend) for students and staff resident on college campuses.

The main language of instruction in each college involved in this study was English (in line with IB requirements and in common with the majority of international schools<sup>9</sup>); only two colleges had taken up the option to teach certain subjects from Groups Three

<sup>7</sup> Most of these syllabi were designed by UWC staff and approved for use by the IBO.

<sup>8</sup> In a small number of cases in various colleges, students were examined for one of their SL subjects after one year of study

<sup>9</sup> Hayden and Thompson (1997a)

to Six in Spanish or French<sup>10</sup>. All students were required to study their mother-tongue language in Group One of the IB's academic programme, which constituted following either a 'teacher-taught' or a 'self-taught' course<sup>11</sup>. The number of teacher-taught languages available in Groups One and Two in each college ranged from four European languages (AD, AW, PC) to twelve languages from around the world (AC, SEA) including Japanese, Arabic, Russian, Mandarin, Korean and Malay. Some of the smaller colleges avoided a solely European focus in language teaching; RCN offered Swedish, Japanese and Norwegian<sup>12</sup>, WK provided tuition in Siswati and Afrikaans, and at LPC students could study Chinese.

All students in each UWC studied the Theory of Knowledge. The basic content of ToK was very similar between colleges and concerned the philosophical analysis of topics pertaining to the social sciences, history, religion and moral judgements; however, in some UWCs, ToK constituted a lengthy seminar or workshop at regular intervals throughout the first year only and in others, it was a taught class or lecture on a weekly basis over two years.

Similarly, the way in which independent research for the Extended Essay<sup>13</sup> was accommodated in the academic programme varied between colleges. On the whole, students were expected to plan and pursue their research projects as independently as possible; however, in some colleges, tutor intervention in students' projects was generally greater than in others and certain colleges coordinated other curriculum requirements and demands of college life with those of the Extended Essay more effectively than others. College records of Extended Essay topics illustrated that they had been wide-ranging and often highly ambitious. Most were related to students' strongest HL subject, many involved travel and empirical study for which holidays or Project Weeks<sup>14</sup> were set aside, and substantial numbers of students chose to base their investigation on their country of origin.

<sup>10</sup> i.e. Economics in Spanish at AW; Philosophy in French at PC.

<sup>11</sup> Language A1 was the student's mother tongue. If the student's mother tongue was not one of the subjects taught by teaching staff in the college, then assistance was provided (in line with IB guidelines) in order that the student could study their mother tongue as a 'self-taught' subject at subsidiary level.

<sup>12</sup> At RCN and AD, all students and staff were also expected to learn the language of their college's national context. Norwegian and Italian respectively, though not necessarily for examination.

<sup>13</sup> The Extended Essay was a requirement for full diploma students only.

<sup>14</sup> Each college (with the exception of WK) set aside at least one week in the academic year for students to follow a 'special interest' off campus (see Chapter Five for further discussion)

### **Additional academic programmes in UWCs**

At the time of data collection for this study, most UWCs were running courses, workshops, conferences and other activities under titles such as Global Concerns, International and Cultural Affairs (ICA), and Forum. Sometimes these constituted CAS options, but in most instances they functioned as academic programmes, which were offered in addition to the IB, though not officially assessed. Many of these programmes had evolved as a result of what were perceived as the ‘*growing formality*’ and ‘*constraints*’ of the IB (Sutcliffe 1987b: 6) and usually addressed matters of current day international relations and affairs.

The provision made for these programmes varied from college to college. For example, they might call for voluntary or compulsory participation; occur on a weekly or termly basis; and be led by staff, students or both. However, the research data indicated that their content proved broadly similar between colleges; contemporary issues relating to the environment, human rights, peace and conflict, technological development, and social concerns (e.g. AIDS, crime and unemployment) were considered in presentations (internal and external speakers), debates, and sometimes, practical tasks or projects.

### **The relevance of academic programmes to UWC aims**

The UWC movement played a highly significant role in the early development of the IB and has continued to have an influence throughout most of the intervening period by means of, for example, IBO board membership and course development. As the overview above has demonstrated, the fundamental rationale and aims of each organisation had remained unchanged as each had evolved and they were consistent with one another. Broadly speaking, each organisation set out to provide a challenging and rigorous academic education alongside, though not discrete from, an education in, what was referred to as, ‘responsible citizenship’. The discussion that follows digs below the rhetoric to consider what the evaluation established about the reality of the academic learning experiences in UWCs and their relevance to these aims.

### *High academic standards*

There is wide-ranging evidence of the IB's academic standard. A survey of IB participating schools in North America conducted in 1984<sup>15</sup> revealed that schools' decisions to adopt the curriculum were influenced most by its reputation for academic excellence and its appeal for gifted students (Fox 1998). Thomas (1988) and Daniel and Cox (1992) found that USA IB graduates scored more highly in university entrance tests than the average university entrant. Peterson (1987) demonstrated that IB graduates achieved better first degree results than A Level graduates. And a British survey of the IB (1991)<sup>16</sup> reported that while Higher Level IB subjects were similar in difficulty and rigour to British A Levels in terms of subject-specific skills, they offered more opportunities for and greater achievement in oral work and independent research.

These findings, alongside the highly creditable achievements of UWC students in final IB assessments (displayed in Table IV below), may be seen as evidence that not only were UWC and the IBO effective in meeting their respective aims to '*uphold high academic standards*' (UWCIDO 1996b: 1) and to provide an academically rigorous curriculum (IBO 1996a), but that the IB facilitated UWC's aim to achieve high standards in academic learning. In fact, an overview of the content of IB syllabi and assessment criteria revealed that the IB was strongly biased towards academic and intellectual learning.

**Table IV**  
**UWC IB results (1996)<sup>17</sup>**

	AC	AD	AW	LPC	PC	RCN <sup>18</sup>	SEA	WK
<b>Average score<sup>19</sup> [30/29]</b>	34.34	35.01	33.13	36.6	35.31	--	34.9	33.8
<b>Pass rate [79%]</b>	95%	93.2%	96%	99.1%	97.8%	--	98.5%	98.2%

[ ] Unofficial figures provided by the IBO in March 97 on the basis of May 96 and November 96 IB results globally

<sup>15</sup> The survey was conducted by the IB North America (IBNA) office, but is not fully referenced in Fox's writing.

<sup>16</sup> DES (1991) *A Survey of the IB* (conducted by HMI and based on three schools in Britain, including AC)

<sup>17</sup> UWC IB results in 2002 demonstrated that the movement has maintained similarly high standards

<sup>18</sup> The first cohort of RCN students completed the IB in May 97

<sup>19</sup> The maximum number of points that could be achieved was 45

***Responsible citizens***

Citizenship education was found to be central to both UWC's and the IBO's statements of aims (see Appendices II and VII). However, analysis of these texts, and, more importantly, the content and practice of UWC education, revealed that the concept of citizenship therein was now far broader than the notions of civic duty, which had originated from Hahn's ideas. As the historical synopsis provided in Chapter Two indicated, UWC's aims and rationale have evolved in line with more widespread concern about world affairs.

According to Heater (1990: 140), concern about world affairs originated from '*the uneasiness of ancient cosmopolitans at the artificiality of sub-dividing the human race into distinct political units*' and was subsequently reinforced by '*new layers of concern - the desire to end war, then the wish to honour human rights, and, most recently, worries about preserving the biosphere*'. These layers of concern were very evident in the concept of citizenship shared and promoted in the contemporary UWC movement and the IBO. Each organisation presented a similar profile of 'responsible' citizenship. The IBO stated that it aimed to develop:

...a critical and compassionate thinker, an informed participant in local and world affairs who values the shared humanity that binds all people together while respecting the variety of cultures and attitudes that makes for the richness of life. (IBO 1996a: 1)

UWC's Mission also projected the image of a responsible, 'world-minded' and informed participant in global society, but, in addition, it specified the need for political and environmental awareness and an active commitment to the ideals of peace, justice, understanding and cooperation.

The IBO and UWC curriculum guidance available at the time of this project's data collection made clear that the academic curriculum had a role to play in educating for citizenship and that learning in this respect was not intended to be a means to achieve or supplement conventional curriculum goals, but to be a goal in its own right. In regard to this goal, the data revealed an interesting mismatch between students' and teachers' views of the role of academic learning in UWCs.

In common with much of the writing in this field, UWC teaching staff spoke of the academic learning experience more as a medium for what Kennedy (1997: vii) called ‘civics education’ - formal programmes of instruction and the knowledge base considered necessary for citizenship - than as a place for citizenship education, which was defined by Kennedy as ‘*multiple ways in which citizens are encouraged to pursue their roles in a democratic society*’. Students, on the other hand, tended to place most emphasis on what they learnt in the classroom about, for example, active learning, debate and negotiation, respect for alternative worldviews, and especially, as Table V (overleaf) demonstrates, critical thinking.

UWC teachers and students differed little, however, in the view that certain subjects were more effective venues than others for civics/citizenship education. The data contained in Table V was only part of a considerable body of evidence collected in UWCs, which indicated that the humanities (Group 3 of the IB) were ‘hot spots’ of effectiveness in relation to the aim of developing ‘responsible citizens’ as defined above.

However, this research (like that of Edwards and Fogelman 1993 and Morrison 1994) established that, in various respects, the learning activities of all curriculum disciplines contributed, and in some cases appeared to have further potential to contribute, towards civics/citizenship education. Data arising from interviews and journals, as well as classroom observations and a basic overview of curriculum syllabi, revealed that academic activities across the curriculum were instrumental in achieving UWC’s goal to educate for responsible citizenship.

**Table V**  
**Students' perceptions of where their learning was enhanced by the**  
**IB academic curriculum in relation to certain UWC aims (Q. Item M1)**

Figures are expressed as percentages of the total number of responses to this item N = 551

	International Understanding	Environment Awareness	Political Awareness	Humanitarian Awareness (e.g. issues of peace & justice)	Critical Thinking	Awareness of own culture/origin
<b>Group 1</b> <b>Lang. A1</b> (mother tongue)	26	--	--	--	<b>76</b>	47
<b>Group 2</b> <b>Lang. A2, B, ab</b> <b>initio</b> (foreign)	<b>53</b>	--	--	--	<b>53</b>	36
<b>Group 3</b> <b>Individuals and Society</b>	<b>56</b>	28	<b>69</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>71</b>	39
<b>Group 4</b> <b>Experimental Sciences</b>	--	<b>65</b>	--	--	<b>53</b>	--
<b>Group 5</b> <b>Maths</b>	--	--	--	--	<b>57</b>	--
<b>Group 6</b> <b>Arts &amp; Electives</b> <sup>20</sup>	<b>62</b>	--	--	43	<b>72</b>	--
<b>Theory of Knowledge</b>	32	--	--	29	<b>82</b>	25

#### Explanation of Table V:

Students were asked to indicate whether these variables in their own development were enhanced ('increased') by the subjects they studied from each group of the IB's academic programme, the Theory of Knowledge, and the Extended Essay independently<sup>21</sup>. Responses have been presented in a format that illustrates where classroom learning was considered influential in relation to the movement's aims for citizenship education by at least 25% of student respondents. All of the cells shown received some student response, but for ease of reference, where responses totalled less than 25% of all responses to this questionnaire item, they are not displayed (--). Shaded cells received more than a 50% response rate and are referred to as 'hot spots' of influence or effectiveness.

<sup>20</sup> As some students studied an additional subject from Groups 1-5, rather than a subject from Group 6, student responses with regard to Group 6 (N = 228) are recorded as a 'valid percentage' (i.e. % of those who study a subject from this section).

<sup>21</sup> The Extended Essay is omitted from this representation as the researcher was unable to determine how many students had not started their essay at the time the questionnaire was administered in order to calculate a valid percentage.



**Knowledge for informed citizenship** As Kennedy (*op.cit.*) points out, there has been much academic debate about where in the curriculum the responsibility for civics education lies. In the context of UWC colleges, most students and teachers shared the opinion that the acquisition of knowledge relevant to the movement's aims for citizenship was dependent to some degree upon students' academic and service choices and the disposition of particular teachers towards this area of learning. However, it was apparent that all components of the academic programme in each UWC played some part in generating knowledge about social, political, economic, technological and/or environmental concepts and processes globally [henceforth referred to as civics knowledge/education/learning].

This learning was attributable to both official syllabus content and additional teacher/student input. For example, the IB History syllabus included consideration of '*The causes of World War II*' and the issues of rights and liberties involved; the subject Environmental Systems investigated cycles and changes in ecosystems and the ecosphere; the study of languages (mother tongue and foreign) and World Literature also involved wider discussion of the countries concerned (e.g. their values and cultures); a particularly cosmopolitan exploration of exchange mechanisms during an economics class at AC was just one example amongst many found across the movement of the opportunities to draw on the diverse international mix of the students themselves; and even mathematics, a subject described by some teachers as lacking in any dimension for civic education, was observed to include some debate about global economics, as well as numerical systems and mathematical truths around the world.

UWC's additional academic programmes, such as Global Concerns, ICA and Forum, were found to be an important source of subject matter for civics learning, especially in response to concerns (voiced mainly by UWC teachers) that some students had very limited access to learning about political and environmental concepts and processes via their chosen HL and SL subjects. Questionnaire data agreed with other data gathered in this respect; of the students who stated increases in their awareness of world politics, current affairs, and environmental and humanitarian issues<sup>22</sup> (Q. Item K2), most attributed these increases to subjects from Group Three of the IB, additional academic

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<sup>22</sup> 91% of all questionnaire respondents

programmes, and the informal exchange of knowledge and views amongst UWC fellow students.

These additional programmes usually constituted thorough and carefully balanced explorations of the local, national, and global perspectives on topical issues from around the world. For example, presentations and debates considered forms of injustice, inequality and discrimination, various successful and unsuccessful humanitarian interventions, and the obligations and responsibilities of local, national and global communities in these matters.

Furthermore, despite the fact that these programmes were not part of the examined curriculum, it was apparent that the potency of the learning experiences that they provided was heightened by what Jenkins (1998: 98) has called '*the total commitment of the institution and the people in it*' to them. Research data indicated that these programmes were usually a collaborative effort on the part of staff and students and were generally highly valued, even constituting '*highlights in the yearly calendar*' (AC04MT) where they took the form of whole college workshops lasting a day or more:

Global Concerns is pretty cool... I thought I was pretty aware when I came here, but you realise how much more there is to know after one of those [Global Concerns workshops].  
(AC08FC<sup>2</sup>)

***Attitudes and skills for active citizenship***      During this evaluation, most of the direct references to UWC's aim to be '*a training in active citizenship*' (UWC Guidelines 1983: 3) encountered were related to community service activities in the colleges. However, by unpicking the concept of 'training' for active citizenship alongside the data concerning the academic curriculum, it became apparent that in studying the academic curriculum students were provided with a wealth of opportunities to develop attitudes and skills commonly associated with the notion of active participation as a citizen of local, national and global societies.

Citizenship education is generally considered to involve knowledge and understanding of an individual's rights and duties in various social contexts. However, the

development of certain intellectual and social skills, as well as the attitudes and values which predispose an individual to employ that knowledge and those skills, is regarded as essential for citizenship if it is to take an active form in democratic society:

Knowledge about citizenship is only partially useful if it does not lead on to the formulation of attitudes and the acquisition of skills; attitudes are but prejudices unless grounded in a firm and clear understanding; and action is wanting direction without attitudes and is irresponsible and/or inefficient if born in ignorance. (Heater 1990: 336)

In UWCs, active citizenship was promoted to some extent via specific curriculum content in UWCs. Subjects such as Theory of Knowledge and activities such as Conflict Resolution were specifically designed to build certain intellectual and social skills conducive to active citizenship. Many UWC staff and much of the documentation on college programmes emphasised ToK's responsibilities for stimulating '*critical reflection on the knowledge and the experience of students both in and outside the classroom*'<sup>23</sup>. While this evaluation's findings indicated that ToK bore little relation to students' concrete experiences (see Chapter Five), its role in supporting students to be enquiring and sceptical about information and to make meaningful connections between different academic disciplines was evident. Students commented to the effect: '*It really makes you question what knowledge is*' (WK18MC<sup>2</sup>).

Table V illustrates that 82% of all students questionnaired felt ToK *increased* their ability to think critically (Q. Item M1) and other questionnaire responses revealed that of the 77% of students who felt their '*willingness to question traditions, conventions or knowledge*' had increased as a result of their UWC experiences, more than half indicated that ToK was one of the aspects of their UWC experience which had influenced this change most (Q. Item K2).

However, the fact that more than 50% of students questionnaired found that academic studies across the disciplines positively influenced the development of *critical thinking* emphasised the importance of considering the classroom experience in broader terms than the content of the curriculum. It became clear that the promotion of active

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<sup>23</sup> IBO guide for ToK, 1994: 3

citizenship was also part of the fabric of the colleges and the way in which they operated.

With respect to academic learning, it was evident that many of the specific values and skills associated with active citizenship were found to be either implicit or explicit criteria for success. For example, learner initiative, personal responsibility, critical thought, and oral skills were fostered and rewarded across the curriculum<sup>24</sup>. Students in all UWCs were generally encouraged to take an active and participatory role in their learning and most classroom activities described or observed during this evaluation included regular opportunities to share, cooperate, negotiate, debate and problem-solve.

In many instances, teachers acted as facilitators, challenging students to express and defend their thinking in a forum where it was considered seriously by all, rather than determined right or wrong by any one authority. Students were encouraged to investigate, question and draw conclusions from various sources of information, including books, teachers and one another.

In line with a more global notion of citizenship, the format of the IB also placed considerable emphasis on the development of linguistic skills by requiring that all students should be able to communicate in English, their mother-tongue (if different), and at least one other foreign language. Other skills were more dependent on students' curriculum choices, for example, information technology skills were only regularly taught and used in one or two optional academic subjects in all UWCs.

Values such as tolerance, fairness, and respect for truth were very evident in the academic learning environment (as well as other aspects of college life) and in explanations of it. These values operated as a mainly unspoken code of conduct, often referred to as the '*UWC spirit*' and were generally consistent from lesson to lesson and from college to college. Although largely unspoken, the UWC spirit was very purposefully 'passed down' by the example of staff and established students, especially as part of elaborately planned induction programmes for new incoming students.

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<sup>24</sup> Although the IB placed emphasis on developing these qualities and skills in its format, guidance and accreditation, most UWC teachers also described it as their personal philosophy of teaching and/or the philosophy of teaching and learning in their UWC.

This overall approach to teaching and learning was widespread within the movement; however, it was not evident where i) group composition and size did not facilitate all-inclusive interaction amongst a diversity of perspectives, ii) teaching staff adopted an essentially didactic style of teaching, and iii) students and teaching staff were overly preoccupied with syllabus coverage or academic grades.

### ***A genuinely international academic curriculum***

The very idea of educating for ‘good’ citizenship, particularly in and for a multicultural context, immediately raises questions about who decides what is desirable in terms of the particular knowledge, values and skills to be learnt. For example, questions concerning the legitimacy of teaching students that international cooperation and the absence of military conflict are good leads debate headlong into the educationally sensitive area of indoctrination. Questions concerning whose version of history or whose perspective on human rights should be taught also raise concerns about students becoming remote from their own national identities and cultural roots.

Over the years, the IB’s syllabi and examinations have received some criticism on the grounds that they are essentially European (Fox 1985, Linden 1994), even imperialistic (Buckheit 1995). And, on the basis of the axiom that there can be no one concept of good citizenship and no one image of good society or a better world beyond dispute, Cox and Scruton (1984) amongst others have been quick to accuse education for global citizenship, and more specifically subjects commonly associated with this area of education such as Peace Studies<sup>25</sup>, of indoctrination. In the face of such criticism, the IBO and UWC have defended their educational aims and practice in a number of ways. They have stated that they aim to provide ‘*a genuinely international academic curriculum*’ ‘...based on the pattern of no single country’<sup>26</sup>; they have emphasised the belief that international education must be a process of learning about ones self as well as others; and the words of the IBO’s Director General (IBO 1996a: 1) have been used to stress that students are not expected to adopt ‘*alien points of view, merely [to be] exposed to them and ... to respond intelligently*’.

There were a number of examples of ways in which both the IBO and the UWC movement had sought to make curriculum content and presentation as genuinely

<sup>25</sup> This subject, now officially accredited by the IBO, was originally designed by staff at AC and considers peace and conflict on an individual, local, national and international basis

<sup>26</sup> UWC Guidelines (1983: 4) and IBO (1996a: 2) respectively

international as possible. The study of the student's mother-tongue language as well as a range of world literature in the Language A1 component of the IB was intended to expose students to other cultures while guarding against creating '*a generation of rootless world citizens*' (Peterson 1987: 5). The stipulation that UWCs, '*so far as practicable*', should have a '*significantly international teaching staff*' (UWC Guidelines 1983: 11) was intended to enhance the international character of the learning environment, as well as increase opportunities for international interaction.

Students and teachers involved in this evaluation were generally of the opinion that all aspects of the academic programme in their UWC had, to varying degrees, an 'international dimension'<sup>27</sup>. In common with the patterns displayed in Table V, students and teachers tended to feel that an international dimension was most evident in the IB subjects from Group Three and least evident in the sciences (usually relating to global environmental issues alone) and mathematics. Whereas school-designed subjects, such as Peace and Conflict Studies and World Religions, and additional academic activities, such as Global Concerns, were highly praised by teachers and students for their attention to a diversity of perspectives. In fact, after the completion of this evaluation, Jenkins<sup>28</sup> (1998: 95) wrote that the Global Concerns programme was designed to make '*...the "International" in the International Baccalaureate more obvious and more all embracing*'.

Only a small minority of students and teachers criticised academic programmes on the grounds of their international content. Despite the World Literature component in Language A1, most of these criticisms were related to the literature (or its translation) studied in Group One and in Theatre Arts in Group Six. For example, a student studying Theatre Arts at AC commented:

The plays that were chosen for our Theatre Arts course have discriminated against some of us academically. If you are not English or a native English speaker, it is difficult to understand the language and the concepts, let alone perform them for examiners.

(AC09MC<sup>2</sup>)

<sup>27</sup> An 'international dimension' was defined as curricula subject matter and tasks which related to or originated from a range of perspectives globally, rather than any single perspective.

<sup>28</sup> Colin Jenkins was the Head of the UWC of the Atlantic at the time of this evaluation

In addition to official syllabus content, the IBO recommended that teachers should make use of the flexibility deliberately inherent in its syllabi to introduce additional international content and/or material specifically relevant to their institution's global region. Whilst all of the UWC teachers interviewed were able to give examples of ways in which they had developed the international content of their given subject, many emphasised that the most significant factor of influence in this respect was the diversity of student nationalities within their study groups. Research observations concurred with this viewpoint; supported by small class sizes, classroom activities regularly incorporated open discussion, which capitalised on the international composition of the student group to develop a teaching point.

However, perhaps the movement's strongest defence against providing culturally biased education came, once again, in the emphasis given to developing the skill of critical thinking:

Most of the topics we study are pretty international, but even so teachers can still give a Western taste to a subject... but it's o.k. to say "Excuse me, that's not the way I would look at it" (AW05MC<sup>1</sup>)

They [UWC students] are opinionated young people and we positively encourage that.  
(RCN03FT)

A questioning and critical approach to learning was promoted across the curriculum in all UWCs. Encouraging learners '*to think for themselves*', Heater (1990:340) proposes, is '*the reverse of indoctrination*' and at the very heart of citizenship education. UWC was keen to counter the inevitable criticisms of its value-oriented mission by articulating this approach to learning:

... [students] work out new values without loss of personal or cultural identity... it is for them, not us, to determine these new values. (Sutcliffe 1985: 8)

### The spirit of teaching and learning in UWCs

As the data already discussed in this chapter exemplifies, a dominant theme emerged in responses concerning the influence of academic study in UWCs. UWC students and graduates, in particular, placed far greater emphasis on the way in which they were taught and the spirit of the learning environment, than they did upon what they were taught. This finding is in line with the findings of research conducted by Hayden and Thompson (1995c). Their study of the development of ‘*international attitudes*’<sup>29</sup> established that the informal aspects of learning experiences, such as social interaction and teaching methods, were more influential than the content, organisation and structure of the curriculum.

In a group interview, the following dialogue occurred amongst five second year students at Atlantic College:

Student: The way we learn here is very different to anything I would have experienced back home. It’s not like the teacher stands at the front and tells us how it is.

Student: Yeah, it’s pretty cool. We all kind of pitch in... we listen to each other as much as we listen to the teacher.

Student: And most of the time, you’re expected to have done some sort of research by yourself before the lesson, so that you can get involved.

[Researcher: So what role does the teacher play?]

Student: Mainly, they keep us on track – keep things focused on what we’re supposed to be learning about.

Student: They debate subjects with us, throw in a fact or something we haven’t thought of or say, challenge us about the way we are setting up an experiment.

Student: Sometimes they just play devil’s advocate to make us really think through what we’re saying. I found that tough to begin with – arguing with a teacher.

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<sup>29</sup> They investigated the views of first year undergraduate students at the University of Bath who had previously experienced what might be called an international education



Analysis of this dialogue, as well as a vast amount of similar data gathered across the movement, revealed an approach to teaching and learning which Crick (1998), amongst others, considers fundamental for citizenship education:

...any grounding in citizenship requires the development of verbal skills and self-confidence. Young people need to think about and present their own arguments and develop an empathy with the opinions of others. (*TES* 27.3.98 p.13)

Overall approaches towards teaching and learning were generally found to be consistent across the UWC movement, were rooted in shared notions of the role of the learner and that of the teacher, and were related to a broadly shared philosophy on teaching and learning. UWC heads explained the generally shared approach to teaching and learning in their colleges in terms similar to those used by Heater and Morrison:

If good citizenship requires any particular qualities these must surely include self-discipline, initiative, co-operativeness. Traditional teaching techniques are hardly designed to foster these characteristics. (Heater 1990: 204)

How can people be expected to show initiative, independence, a creativity for decision-making, an understanding of freedom and an ability to participate in the societal process when the first third of their lives... has been spent on the receiving end of information, knowledge and values which have been organized, processed and assessed by others?

(Morrison 1987: 195)

However, even some of the strongest advocates of this approach to teaching and learning, expressed some concerns about it as well. These concerns related mainly to the occidental expectations implicit within it. One teacher explained:

It is only too clear that, for some students, the way we do things here is challenging the very essence of their culture. Even the fact that we encourage them to think critically about the way we do things - to make their own minds up - goes against what some students have been brought up to believe is right. (AD01MT)

The majority of student questionnaire respondents in each college indicated that the ethos<sup>30</sup> of their UWC '*favoured the vocal*', '*favoured individuality*' and was '*occidental*' (Q. Item C)<sup>31</sup>. Given the composition of the student body at LPC, the

<sup>30</sup> A widely recognised term used in the questionnaire to refer to the 'feel of the place' or 'the way things are done here'. The academic significance of the terms ethos and culture will be explored in Chapter 7.

<sup>31</sup> No significant differences were found amongst students' responses on the basis of nationality

college's Head was particularly well placed to offer some insights into the cultural implications of a learning environment of this nature:

A large number of our students at LPC come from cultures where critical thinking in an educational context is considered highly disrespectful. I was given a ToK essay recently by a girl who said "In my own culture I am considered a model student. I do my homework, I don't miss classes, I take neat notes, I do well in my examinations. Here [LPC] I am a failure because I am not outspoken. My teachers and some other students seem disappointed in me because I am not asking difficult questions."

Although this style of learning appeared to be a relatively new experience for most students, the research data indicated a tendency for students from western, developed world educational backgrounds<sup>32</sup> to speak of adjusting to new levels of independence in their learning and more familiarity and interaction with teaching staff than they had previously been used to; while students from eastern or developing world educational backgrounds often described adapting to a learning environment and expectations which bore little or no resemblance to their previous experiences. It was interesting to find, therefore, that while more than half of all questionnaire respondents felt that they had '*enough*' responsibility for their academic learning, 37% of respondents from countries outside North America and Western Europe felt that they had '*too much*' responsibility in this respect (only 4% of respondents from North America or Western Europe felt similarly).

Implicit in spirit of teaching and learning in UWCs were numerous value messages about, for example, the way the individual should function within society, about the integrity of knowledge, and about authority and leadership. The implications of these messages, and the beliefs and assumptions that underpin them, will be discussed further in relation the culture of the UWC movement and its colleges in Chapter Seven. However, for the purposes of this chapter, this evaluation's data has made it apparent that the way in which UWC students learnt had a critical influence upon the movement's effectiveness in meeting its educational aims.

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<sup>32</sup> This group also included most students who had been educated in other international schools or western national schools in eastern or developing world countries prior to their UWC education

### Concluding comments

Data presented in this chapter has demonstrated that UWC's long history of involvement with the IB was reflected in the consistency between the movement's aims and the IB's rationale, structure and content. During the evaluation, it was apparent that while each of the colleges had taken advantage of the flexibility inherent in the IB's format to develop some additional academic programmes relevant to their own circumstances and the needs of their students, the academic curricula of UWCs had much in common.

In line with UWC's mission, academic learning experiences in the colleges were found to influence both the cognitive and affective development of students - in fact, in the case of the latter, perhaps far more than has previously been understood or acknowledged. Sutcliffe (1985), amongst others within the movement, has stressed the overriding importance of the lessons learnt outside the classroom with regards to meeting UWC's aims; on these grounds, this thesis proposes that the academic learning experience has been undervalued.

However, the findings discussed in this chapter do challenge Jonietz's (1991) assertion<sup>33</sup> that it is the academic programme alone which defines international education. The research findings presented here agree with those of Hayden and Wong (1997) as they illustrate that it is not only the structure, organisation and content of the academic curriculum, but the more intangible influences, such as teaching methods and teacher-student relationships, which are crucial in developing, as they put it, '*international attitudes*' or, as discussed here, the broader knowledge, skills and attitudes deemed necessary for global citizenship.

It was apparent that certain parts of the academic curriculum were particularly influential in terms of UWC's aims. While this finding can be attributed in part to syllabus content, certain core values and beliefs embodied in the processes of teaching and learning appeared to be more influential. As the findings presented in Chapter Five will demonstrate, these values and beliefs not only transcended disciplines, but the classroom itself to constitute the broader norms and expectations upon which college life operated in each UWC.

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<sup>33</sup> Jonietz's assertion is discussed at the beginning of this chapter

## **Chapter Five**

### **Learning outside the Classroom in UWCs**

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Often interest in the effectiveness of an educational institution focuses on the official results of its educational programme, since these offer the easiest and most convenient means of comparing institutions. Whilst Table IV in Chapter Four illustrated that an evaluation of the effectiveness of UWCs on this basis provides a very favourable impression, the findings of this research established that UWCs achieved a great deal more in terms of students' learning and development than is demonstrated by these results.

Curricula in UWCs – in the form of the IB plus other subjects and activities – amounted to far more than the academic disciplines. For example, the Creativity, Action and Service programme, Project Weeks, expeditions, presentations, debates and performances were generally prominent and regular features of college timetables. Building on the findings presented in Chapter Four, these 'out-of-class' experiences and their impacts are explored in this chapter in order to provide a comprehensive picture of the formal curriculum and its influences within the UWC experience.

However, as the findings discussed in Chapter Four have already demonstrated, an evaluation of the UWC experience that focused solely on the structure, content and organisation of the curriculum, even in its broadest dimensions, would have offered only limited insights into the influences upon and the outcomes of students' learning. Chapter Five builds on Chapter Four by exploring the significance of the informal influences within the college experience and considers the way in which values embodied in the spirit of classroom were also found to underpin the broader norms and expectations of college life generally.

#### **The potency of key learning experiences outside the classroom**

In interviews, journal writing and questionnaire responses, students were encouraged to reflect upon how their thinking and behaviour had been influenced by college events and experiences. Despite what has been established in Chapter Four about the

considerable influence of academic study in relation to the movement's aims, research data indicated that most students found certain aspects of college life more influential than the classroom experience with respect to UWC's overriding aim: the development of international understanding and tolerance. Table VI illustrates the aspects of college life which the majority or more than half of students questionnaired indicated were most influential in this respect.

**Table VI**  
**Aspects of college life that more than half of students questionnaired indicated**  
**increased international understanding and tolerance a lot** (Q. Item D2&4)

Figures are expressed as percentages of the total number of responses to this item N = 551

	% of students who responded ' <i>increased a lot</i> '	
	IU	Tolerance
Residence life (Valid % N = 494)	80%	82%
National or cultural events	65%	55%
Camps, expeditions and Project Week	62%	64%
Service and activities [CAS]	53%	(39%)
Academic learning or class discussions	(30%)	(27%)

- Note:** i) Valid percentages have been calculated for questionnaire response concerning residential life, because 494 of the 551 questionnaire respondents were residents of UWCs, the remainder were day students and did not answer questions concerning residency.
- ii) 'academic learning or class discussions' has been added to the table for the purpose of comparison.
- iii) The vast majority of students questionnaired indicated that all aspects of college life listed in Q. Items D2&4 increased international understanding and tolerance *a lot/a little*. The only exception was *material resources in college*, which the majority of students indicated did not increase tolerance

The discussion that follows focuses on the aspects of college life listed in Table VI and the ways in which students' experiences of them fostered international understanding and tolerance, as well as other knowledge, values and skills.

### **The Creativity, Action and Service programme**

Creativity, Action and Service [CAS] was the component of the International Baccalaureate [IB] designed to ‘*take seriously the importance of life outside the world of scholarship*’ and to foster ‘*compassionate citizenry*’ (IBO 1996a: 2-3). Comparison between the thinking behind the conception of UWCs and the IBO’s aims and rationale for CAS (Appendix VIII) illustrates that this component of the IB curriculum maintains some of the principles Kurt Hahn<sup>1</sup> held most dear.

### ***The origins of CAS***

Hahn believed that education should include both scholarly and experiential learning: a view that drew upon Plato’s ideas of reaching perfection through balance (Skidelsky 1969) and upon the pedagogical theory of those such as Dewey and Kolb concerning the merits of experiential learning. Hahn was confident that by these means the ‘*decays*’<sup>2</sup> that he identified in society could be remedied. He emphasised the merits of adolescents learning crafts and challenging themselves physically, but he invested most in promoting the notion of ‘*active service*’ in which young people would sense they were needed: a ‘*moral equivalent*’ for the sentiments inspired by war (*The Observer* 1960).

He was critical of what he called ‘*the weakness of the good*’. He advocated the need for ‘*good citizens*’ who were mentally and physically ready to act upon their ‘*civic duty*’ when the need arose (Skidelsky *op.cit.*: 230). He believed that involving and training young people in rescue services could engender a sense of and a readiness for civic duty, and that civic duty, employed in this manner, would ‘*unite members of different nations through the common bond of active humanity*’ (Hahn 1962: 714-719).

Essentially as a result of Hahn’s influence, experiential education predated AC’s adoption of the IB. From the outset a significant part of the college’s timetable was dedicated to activities outside the classroom. Original initiatives from this time, such as cliff, beach and inshore rescue and work with the elderly and physically challenged, were still prominent in AC’s service programme at the time of this evaluation.

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<sup>1</sup> A founder of UWC – see discussion in Chapter Two

<sup>2</sup> The decay of fitness, self-discipline, enterprise, skill and care, and compassion

***CAS: an interpretation of Hahn's principles***

Peterson has acknowledged in many sources the degree to which Hahn's thinking influenced the IB, in particular the CAS requirement and the Extended Essay (Hahn's '*grand passion*'). However, it was clear that UWC's interpretations of citizenship had evolved beyond Hahn's notions of a '*good Samaritan*'<sup>3</sup> forging better relations between nation states to a concept that included the rights and responsibilities of all citizens within an increasingly interdependent world. As the slogan '*Think global, act local*' - much used in UWCs - suggests the movement's concepts of citizenship had come to include '*... a consciousness of links with the wider world, which integrates in a positive way the global and the local*' (Massey 1994: 154).

As a rationale for service learning in particular, shifts in the conceptualisation of citizenship had changed the face of service activities in UWCs. One outcome of these changes in thinking had been a move away from the dominance of rescue services and their associations with outworn concepts of citizenship relating to nationalism and military service. At the time of data collection, the UWC movement advised its colleges that rescue services should only be established '*where appropriate*' (UWC Guidelines 1983: 4). Like AC, AW ran a well organised rescue service as part of a broader service programme. By training students to participate in a mountain search and rescue team in the rugged terrain of the Rocky Mountains, the college offered a relevant service to its local community. However, PC reviewed its original sea and land rescue services in the light of the needs of its environment and, consequently, this component of the college's programme was redesigned to focus on marine and forest protection.

Another outcome has been the more global orientation of CAS options. For example, during this evaluation, all UWCs ran a range of services and activities related to global human rights (e.g. Amnesty International, teaching literacy in refugee camps), and to environmental protection and conservation (e.g. monitoring pollution levels, clearing litter).

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<sup>3</sup> Hahn (1962: 719)

### ***CAS in UWCs***

The IBO defined each component of the CAS programme as follows:

**Creativity** is interpreted as widely as possible to cover a wide range of arts and other activities and to include creativity by the individual student in designing and carrying out service projects.

**Action** can include participation in expeditions, individual and team sports and physical training; it can also include carrying out creative and service projects as well as training for service.

**Service** is community or social service; it can include environmental and international projects.

(IBO CAS 1996b)

The content of CAS programmes in each UWC was determined in part by local community needs and links, as well as college initiatives and resources, therefore the breadth and content of programmes tended to vary not only according to the size, age and physical resources of each college, but also from year to year. Nevertheless, even the smaller or most recently established UWCs offered an impressive range of options. For example, LPC's programme included:

**Off campus service:** various work with the elderly, with children in squatter and refugee camps, and with the mentally challenged (including physiotherapy); work on the local ecosystem and coral monitoring in Tolo Harbour; English tutorials in local schools; and work at the local 'Garden Farm'

**On-campus service:** assistants for the laboratories, library, tuck shop, computer facilities, and mail sorting; peer support; gardening; emergency services; ecological monitoring of Starfish Bay; English, Cantonese and Mandarin language support for LPC students; and noticeboard maintenance.

**Activities:** kayaking; ice skating; various racket sports; self defence; sailing; basketball; soccer; aerobics; and orienteering.

**Creativity:** art appreciation; French Club; photography; yearbook; board games; mural painting; Chinese calligraphy, dance, music and cooking; choir; literary magazine; guitar tutorials; Latin American dance; and current affairs.



During ‘Orientation’<sup>4</sup> in each college, a range of established CAS options were introduced to new students. Some colleges operated systems whereby students followed a variety of activities and services - changing options each term or at the beginning of the next academic year; others required or allowed students to remain with the same service, but rarely the same activities, over the entire two year period.

In most colleges, all or most of the teaching staff were involved in CAS activities. However, they often took the role of facilitator as they did in the classroom and it was more common to find second year students teaching or training students new to a service than it was to find a member of staff taking a leading role. As was the case in the classroom, emphasis was placed on students being active in their own learning, taking responsibility, challenging themselves, and learning from one another.

CAS activities not related to service tended to operate on a much more informal basis than service activities. Within this component of the CAS programme, it was easier for students to initiate new activities and these were often based on sharing their personal interests, talents and origins. As a consequence, there was a distinctly international flavour to the activities on offer in each college. A significant number of the activities encountered during this research were organised independently by students and on this basis, AC, for example, was able to run over 100 ‘activities’ (as opposed to ‘services’) within its programme in 1995/96.

### **The significance of CAS**

CAS, and more specifically service, arose repeatedly in research data concerning the UWC experience and its effects. Students and graduates were able to list an impressive range of practical skills acquired through their CAS activities, such as diving, carpentry, life saving, survival, and Braille reading/writing. In other respects, the outcomes of CAS experiences appeared to replicate or build upon the outcomes of classroom learning. For example, many students and graduates spoke of enhanced self-confidence and self-esteem as a result of conquering fears and of achieving tasks they had not believed they were capable of; of learning to act on their initiative; and of developing problem-solving, teamwork and leadership skills.

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<sup>4</sup> A period at the beginning of each academic year during which staff and second year students led a range of activities designed to induct new students into college life

For most students and graduates, service was a particularly memorable and potent experience. Through service many students encountered human or environmental circumstances of which they had had little or no knowledge previously. For some students, these encounters provided their first direct contact with social, political, economic and environmental problems and injustices. And it was clear that for most students they not only fostered forms of understanding, but also a sense of compassion and responsibility for the needs and realities of the people or the environment they served.

These findings support those of a large body of research on the impacts of service learning originating mainly from America<sup>5</sup>. They also have some bearing on Bartlett's argument (1993) that it is not a shared curriculum or even teaching methods that encourage internationalism, but an empathy and concern for other cultures<sup>6</sup>. In this respect, this study produced an interesting finding upon which there appeared to be very little discussion in this research field. As the following discussion demonstrates, data indicated that there may be a link between the spirit in which service activities were conducted and the way in which students interpreted these activities.

### ***Perceptions of service***

The findings of questionnaire item M3 supported qualitative data to reveal distinct patterns relating to each of the colleges and the way in which students perceived service. Whilst Heater (1990) states that citizenship is not about charity, but about equal rights and moral duty, it became evident that where colleges promoted the idea of *'helping the needy/those less privileged than yourself'* and contact with the local community occurred solely or mainly for this purpose, students tended to talk of service as a charitable act seemingly based on a sense of altruism. However, where colleges encouraged students to participate more broadly in the local community and promoted the idea of reciprocal relationships, students tended to talk of service as their *'contribution to the community'*. In these circumstances, most students spoke of *'working with'*, rather than serving, members of the local community and appeared to have greater understanding of their local community and its needs, as well as some sense of membership of that community.

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<sup>5</sup> E.g. Lipka *et al.* (1985), Rutter and Newmann (1989), Rolzinski (1990), Brewster *et al.* (1991), Raupp and Cohen (1992), Silcox (1993)

<sup>6</sup> Bartlett's argument originated from his study of international schools rather than service learning itself

Research conducted by O’Keefe (1996) did encounter some similar findings in American Jesuit schools. His study established that institutional ethos was important in aiding students to make sense of service and in counteracting what he called attitudes of ‘*noblesse oblige*’<sup>7</sup>. Noblesse oblige is an interesting concept in relation to both service learning and UWCs more broadly, especially given what has already been established in this thesis about UWC’s founding aspirations to produce a class of leaders and its student selection criteria. This concept will be considered further in relation to the culture of UWC in Chapter Seven.

### *A dose of realism*

Many UWC students also spoke of how service provided ‘*an eye-opening experience*’ or an insight into ‘*the way the world works*’. In fact, many students, graduates and staff felt that service was a critical means of developing a balance between realism and idealism. One staff member commented:

Amidst all the talk of a better world in our very idyllic little community here, it [service] provides an important dose of realism. The students’ that come here are usually very keen to put the world to rights, service educates them about frustration, apathy, injustice, but it also encourages them to find ways of overcoming these obstacles.

(AD informal chat with staff member)

The need for a spirit of realism and a sense of being ‘*in touch with the real world*’ arose regularly in discussion with staff, student and graduate interviewees, especially those concerned with the more remotely located colleges. Some UWC staff and graduates in particular were of the opinion that ‘*we will achieve very little if students only play out a model of an ideal world on campus.*’ (AW01FT). This view was entirely contrary to Hahn’s belief that education should happen in a context ‘*remote from the corrupting environment*’ (Skidelsky *op.cit.*: 185).

Hahn envisaged colleges in ‘*protecting*’ and ‘*healing pastures*’<sup>8</sup> and the settings of most UWCs - picturesque and some distance from industrial and commercial centres - appeared to reflect Hahn’s vision. However, in an effort to avoid isolated and

<sup>7</sup> Benevolent and honourable behaviour which is considered to be the responsibility of persons of high birth or rank

<sup>8</sup> Skidelsky *op.cit.*: 191

introspective communities, activities such as guest speakers, Project Week and Host Families<sup>9</sup> were included in college life.

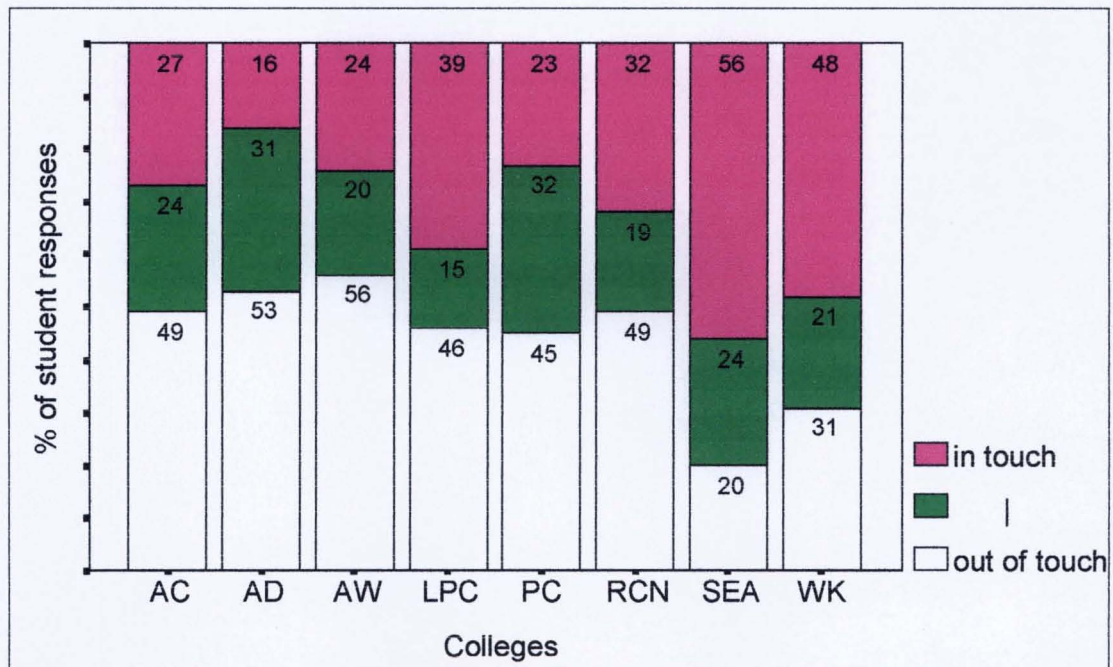
Nevertheless, as Table VII illustrates, students' questionnaire responses concerning the ethos of their college revealed that large numbers of students felt that their UWC was 'out of touch with the real world'<sup>10</sup>.

**Table VII**

**The distribution of student questionnaire responses concerning how  
'in touch/out of touch with the real world' they perceived their UWC to be**

Figures are expressed as percentages of the total number of responses to this item in each college<sup>11</sup>

(Q. Item C)



Although interview data indicated that these perceptions were associated with other factors of college life as well as college location (e.g. curriculum content and materials, college rules, and the thinking and behaviour of college members), it was interesting to note the general pattern of responses given that SEA, WK and LPC were located

<sup>9</sup> "...those students who wish to spend some of their time with a local family to whom they have been allocated... the link helps to connect the college to the community and to give students a home and friends outside the college..." (AC Personal Handbook, 1995/96: 3)

<sup>10</sup> Wording used by interviewees

<sup>11</sup> See Appendix X for questionnaire return figures for each college

within easy reach of industrial and commercial centres and had proportionally larger numbers of students from the locality than other UWCs. In addition, the finding that a significantly higher percentage<sup>12</sup> of day students than boarders felt that their colleges were ‘*in touch with the real world*’ appeared to strengthen the association between these perceptions of ethos and the amount and type of contact students had with off-campus communities and institutions.

Clearly service experiences played an important role in providing students with a realistic context beyond the college community in which to explore the concept of citizenship experientially. However, as discussion of the meanings students attributed to service has demonstrated and as discussion of UWC graduates’ experiences in Chapter Six will demonstrate, citizenship learning may be enhanced by more regular and more varied contact with off-campus communities and institutions.

### **The significance of cultural events and presentations**

The question of whether becoming aware of one’s identity as a global citizen detracts from or enhances the extent to which one is aware of one’s own nationality has been much debated in literature concerning international education. On this subject, the findings of this evaluation appeared to be supported by, for example, Starr’s (1979) proposal that developing a more global perspective can deepen understandings of one’s own origins; the suggestion by Fox (1985) that one must first be a good national citizen if one is to become an international citizen; and the experience of ex-UWC students Cesare *et al.* (1991: 67) who found ‘...*knowing your own culture is essential in order to get to know others*’. Research by Hayden and Thompson (1995c) and Hayden and Wong (1997) also concurs; they found that an international attitude was not necessarily something that existed in the absence of one’s own identity. In fact, current debate on citizenship education emphasises the need to enable young people to understand their multiple identities – local, national and global (Tate 2000).

Both UWC and the IBO stated the need to preserve and explore students’ cultural roots within an international education. In addition to curriculum measures such as Language A (study of a student’s mother tongue language) and the opportunities taken in the

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<sup>12</sup>  $p = 0.05$

classroom to discuss different countries and cultural perspectives, all UWCs ran cultural events and presentations as a means to foster an interest in the student's own and other cultures. In each college these occasions took place several times a year and involved an evening, a day or a weekend devoted to, for example, performances, debates, and workshops concerning a region of the world.

Like Hayden and Wong (*op.cit.*), this research established that relatively small numbers of students stated that their awareness of their own culture and origins had increased as a result of learning via the academic curriculum<sup>13</sup>. However, 72% of this evaluation's questionnaire respondents stated that their awareness of their *own country, culture* and *race* had increased as a result of their UWC experiences generally (Q. Item K2), and 63% of all respondents felt that they had come to think '*more positively*' about their own country since coming to their UWC (Q. Item E3c)<sup>14</sup>.

Given similar findings, Hayden and Wong (*op.cit.*: 359) proposed that this enhanced sense of identity was due to '*the explaining and defending that goes on informally amongst students, rather than to the formal curriculum*'. Whilst data presented later in this chapter demonstrates that these informal interactions did play a significant role in this respect, it was also apparent that formal occasions such as cultural events had an important part to play.

Cultural events and presentations were also found to contribute to students understanding of one another. 46% of all students questionnaired indicated that developing international understanding involved '*gathering information about others' traditions, habits and beliefs*' (Appendix IX, Table VIII Q. Item D1) and students described cultural events and presentations as venues which encouraged this pursuit. As a result of these occasions, students spoke of knowing more about world cultures (including their own); in fact all students questionnaired felt that these occasions increased their international understanding and tolerance (Q. Items D2&4). However, the data revealed that students, once again, placed most emphasis on the spirit in which these events occurred. Echoing in some respects their descriptions of classroom spirit, they spoke of the cooperation, support and camaraderie engendered, as well as the responsibilities and collaboration involved.

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<sup>13</sup> See Table V in Chapter Four

<sup>14</sup> Interestingly, the 7% of questionnaire respondents who felt that their thinking had become '*less positive*' consisted solely of students from North America or Western Europe

While these occasions were resonant with a more general emphasis on students as ‘envoys’<sup>15</sup> for their country of origin, they were discussed most favourably in UWCs where they functioned as a whole college ‘celebration’ that rallied and valued the input of all or most staff and students. In some colleges, students’ comments indicated that these events offered an important contribution towards greater community cohesion; in others, they appeared to draw and build upon an established sense of ‘communal endeavour’. In journal entries, SEA students spoke of how a similar event, ‘UN Night’, established new friendships and respect amongst day students and boarders who would not normally mix. One student wrote:

This is what I call a real UWC experience. It broke down barriers and everyone was really committed to pulling together to produce something we could all be proud of.

(SEA28FC<sup>2</sup>)

### **The significance of camps, expeditions and Project Week**

The research data revealed some variation in the emphasis that colleges placed on camps, expeditions and Project Week<sup>16</sup> in their yearly calendars. However, the aims of these pursuits - as described by the colleges’ documentation, staff and students - were rooted in a shared sense of purpose concerning the UWC experience and included encouraging student responsibility, a sense of adventure and discovery, and human interaction and understanding.

Expeditions during Orientation Week/s, Project Week and travel during holiday periods<sup>17</sup> were often remembered by students and graduates as potent and formative experiences, which, for example, demanded significant personal and social

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<sup>15</sup> Although this role was promoted in all colleges, research data indicated that students who had been selected by National Committees [NC] in their own country sensed this responsibility more than others. In fact, interview data suggested that the selection process conveyed a wide range of value messages to students prior to their arrival at their respective UWCs, but many NC selected students involved in this research recalled the role of envoy receiving particular emphasis.

<sup>16</sup> Each college (with the exception of WK) set aside at least one week in the academic year for students to follow a ‘special interest’ off campus. Students were encouraged to plan, independently or as part of a group, ‘an experience which cannot easily be achieved at home or in the holidays’ (AD Student Fact Book 95/96: 16). Colleges usually required students to relate their plans for Project Week to some aspect of the curriculum, whether academic or CAS oriented; as PC’s Student Fact Book (1995: 24) explained, it should be ‘useful to the student (and preferably, someone else)’. College records of Project Week activities revealed that students often chose to use this time for community service, physical challenge, cultural discovery, and/or a creative pursuit. For example, in the past students at SEA have used their Project Week to work with ‘street children’ in Bangalore; to assist in a joint project with WK to install a water supply for a school in Swaziland; to take part in a cycling tour of Malaysia; and to study political changes in Hong Kong.

<sup>17</sup> Students who were resident and/or some distance from their family home tended to travel together on informal basis more regularly than non-resident students.

responsibility, and established new levels of understanding and friendship. Many students and graduates who had been involved in Orientation Week expeditions<sup>18</sup> recalled finding them physically and socially challenging, '*in at the deep end*' experiences, which threw students and teachers upon one another's resources, established initial bonds and understandings between people, and '*set the tone*' for college community life:

At that stage we didn't really know what to expect, but the situation just made us come together and deal with each other. We were constantly amazed by what we had in common, but we also saw how completely differently two people can look at or deal with the same thing... I think the feeling was whatever our differences, we're all in this together.

(LPC05MC<sup>1</sup>)

The majority of students questionnaired found that camps, expeditions and Project Week increased international understanding and tolerance (Q. Items D2&4), though students responses to these items in one college differed significantly<sup>19</sup> from those in others, which may be explained by the fact that the college did not run a Project Week.

Some student interviewees in each college also recalled the emphasis placed on environmental awareness during the camps and expeditions they had participated in. It was interesting to find, therefore, that while the majority of students questionnaired in all other UWCs recorded increases in their environmental awareness as a result of their UWC experiences (Q. Item K2b), almost all AW questionnaire respondents indicated an increase in this awareness and almost without exception associated this increase with their involvement in their college's Wilderness programme<sup>20</sup>, seemingly demonstrating the programme's effectiveness in '*nurturing the growth of thoughtful citizens of the environment*'<sup>21</sup>. Students in this college and others also associated increases in their environmental awareness with the Global Concerns programme, environmentally oriented service activities and the study of Environmental Systems (IB Group Four).

<sup>18</sup> E.g. AC: hiking and camping in the Brecon Beacons, WK: living in local homesteads while working in a community school.

<sup>19</sup>  $P = 0.05$

<sup>20</sup> All AW students received wilderness training and were involved in wilderness expeditions in the Rocky Mountains.

<sup>21</sup> Extracted from '*Wilderness Program Goals and Objectives*', AWUWC Wilderness Program Handbook



### **The significance of residential life**

The movement's official criteria for new UWCs stated that colleges were expected to be residential. This criterion was rooted in the belief that residency provides the optimum circumstances for young people of different nationalities to learn about one another by direct experience. To this end, most UWCs resembled a village community in the way that they functioned, their physical layout, their size and even the terminology they used. For example, RCN was purpose-built with a capacity for just two hundred students; student and staff accommodation - built in the style of traditional Norwegian housing – intermingled close to similarly styled classrooms and communal meeting areas around the edge of a fjord; '*village meetings*' were called regularly and were informal affairs in which any member of the community could raise an item for discussion.

As was similar in most UWCs, students at RCN were accommodated in '*houses*', within which there were smaller units shared by four to six students. Reflecting the strategic importance given to the residential aspect of college life, students were carefully allocated within houses to ensure that they lived at close quarters with those of different nationalities. The head at PC explained:

Residential life is essential. There are four or five different nationalities to a room. This demands that students overcome their natural inhibitions and ignorance; it inspires understanding and cooperation. (PC Acting Head)

### ***Living with difference***

WK was the only college which provided its students with single rooms (in blocks with shared facilities). The Acting Head at WK felt this respected students' needs '*for some individual privacy*', a view in line with Hahn's opinion that '*Young people must have a place to be sad*'<sup>22</sup> and a guard against the negative impacts of a lack of privacy in boarding schools<sup>23</sup>. Certainly, student complaints concerning a lack of personal time and space were rare at WK in stark contrast with other UWCs. Furthermore, research data revealed no apparent difference in the degree to which WK students interacted with one another in comparison with student interaction in other colleges; for example, late-night gatherings and international friendships were equally commonplace.

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<sup>22</sup> Hahn (UWCIO 1986: 9)

<sup>23</sup> Research by those such as Lambert (1968) established that a lack of individual privacy in boarding schools was problematic.

However, it was clear that WK students did not encounter the same challenges in terms of the cooperation, compromise, tolerance and understanding required to share a small living space with an internationally diverse group. The following comment illustrates this point well:

It's all very well asking someone about their religion or studying World Religions [IB subject], but that can't possibly give you the same kind of insight as sharing a room with someone of a different religion and finding out what it really means to their way of life - and to your way of life for that matter. (AC12MC<sup>1</sup>)

In fact students and graduates commonly cited the '*intense*' experience of sharing a living space as a key factor not only in developing understandings about others, but also in developing a better understanding of themselves. It seemed a process of '*explaining and defending*'<sup>24</sup> everyday habits and attitudes to roommates provided rich, if sometimes painful, opportunities for students to develop a greater sense of their own identity. Some interviewees, for example, talked of discovering prejudices that they found it difficult to believe they held; others spoke of developing an ability to consider their own country and nationality in a more objective manner – learning to appreciate some characteristics and becoming critical of others.

### ***The impact of residential life on staff-student relations***

On UWC campuses where the majority or all staff and students were resident and where there was a high level of staff and student involvement in campus activities, the strength of community relations often arose in discussion of college life:

I could never work in a conventional day school again. This might be hard work, but it is a whole new perspective on teaching. It breaks down the classroom walls and traditional teacher-student roles... we function as a learning community.

(AC – informal discussion with teacher)

I can visit my teachers in their homes at almost any time, ask about my homework, chat about people back home, eat with them – it's as if we are one big family. (RCN04FC<sup>1</sup>)

On the whole, familiarity and informality appeared to be the code of conduct on fully residential campuses and classroom learning was often observed to include references

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<sup>24</sup> Hayden and Wong (*op.cit.* 359)

to shared experiences outside the classroom. Underpinning the intense, twenty-four hour a day involvement of residential staff were beliefs relating to the merits, for example, of dismantling the traditional image of a teacher as a remote figure of authority and a font of knowledge, of *'learning together'*, and of treating all experiences as learning experiences.

More conventional patterns of interaction, greater formality, and teacher-student role divisions operated where staff and/or students were not resident and shared few activities outside the classroom. In these circumstances, interaction between staff and students tended to be oriented towards the classroom setting, campus space was divided more territorially (i.e. staff and student areas), and students and staff spoke, usually favourably, of the quality of their relations on a more individual or 'them and us' basis, rather than in terms of community relations.

### ***The spirit of residential life***

Whether students learnt to *'rub along'* or established strong bonds with their roommates, the majority of boarders who responded to the student questionnaire<sup>25</sup> indicated that residential life increased their international understanding and tolerance *a lot*. An equivalent degree of consensus was not found with respect to the influence of any other aspect of college life. But placing students from different countries, cultures and races in close proximity to one another does not of itself guarantee understanding, tolerance and cooperation. In fact, as many societies demonstrate globally, these circumstances can foster tension and prejudice.

It became clear that the development of international understanding and tolerance was highly influenced by the spirit of residential life in each college and that this spirit was shaped by certain expectations that were rooted in beliefs about the purpose of the UWC experience. For example, despite the fact that many boarders across the movement reported that at least the first few months were *'demanding'*, even *'traumatic'*, in terms of establishing positive relationships with roommates, seldom were room changes requested or granted. There appeared to be an understanding that residency challenges were a formative component of the college experience, to be valued and worked at. However, students very rarely felt that this understanding had

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<sup>25</sup> N = 494

derived from explicit statements or rules, instead student and graduate interviewees often concluded that the example of fellow UWC students (particularly second year students) and staff did most to ‘*set the tone*’ of residential life, as well as college life more generally.

Duffy (1991) pointed out that ‘*citizenship... is not so much a matter of “to learn” as “to be”*. *Therefore, teachers and others must practise what they teach.*’<sup>26</sup>. The perceived learning merits of role models and ‘*leading by example*’ were very evident in the way UWCs functioned, particularly those which were fully residential. The behaviour of the college head, other staff and second year students during the first few weeks of a new college year appeared to have a particularly potent influence upon new students, as the following comment demonstrates:

You’ve read the stories about how UWC began, seen the Mission, gone through the whole selection thing, you’re in no doubt when you get here that this is about getting along with people from other countries. But really I think it was our second years and the faculty who showed us how it was going to be just by the way they behaved around the place... we watched, we learnt and then we tried to join in. (PC16FG<sup>85</sup>)

Many new boarders who wrote journals for this research during the first term at their UWC remarked upon the strong sense of caring and responsibility for the college community and its environment demonstrated by staff and second year students. As Lambert’s research in boarding schools established, relationships of this kind are not an inherent product of residential education:

... in boarding school you have the power to really hurt or help people.

(A student quotation in Lambert 1968: 392)

In fact, it became apparent that UWCs shared an approach to residential life that actively fostered this atmosphere and reinforced notions of service, interdependence and responsible citizenship. For example, in most college residences each new student was assigned a second year ‘mentor’ or ‘buddy’, as well as a personal tutor amongst the staff; all students undertook certain official responsibilities within the operation of their residence and the college campus; and few communal rules were laid down,

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<sup>26</sup> Michael Duffy’s concluding remarks to the inaugural conference of the Centre of Citizenship Studies in Education quoted by Burkimsher in Edwards and Fogelman (1993: 15)

*'...the philosophy being that students are either committed to leading responsible lives or they should return home'* (Sutcliffe 1987a: 3). Ex-UWC students, Cesare *et al.* (1991: 65) described AD as *'...an open, new environment based on no strict rules but mutual understanding and respect'*.

The experience of residential life was not without criticism, however. Lambert (*op.cit.*) called the boarding school a *'hot house society'*<sup>27</sup> with reference to the intensity of the nurturing process. This intensity was a quality of residential life that many UWC staff and students found difficult to handle at times. For example, they spoke of how the stresses of academic work, especially during examination periods, were blown out of proportion, of how it was difficult to gain any distance from or perspective on a conflict, and of how college life could escalate to a frenetic pace without members of the community being aware of it.

### ***The residential versus the non-residential experience***

Admissions to LPC, SEA, and WK included a larger percentage of students from the local community than admissions to other UWCs. At LPC student, graduate and staff interviewees agreed with the college policy that all students and teaching staff must be resident on campus in order to achieve a *'sense of community'* and *'heighten active participation and interaction'* (LPC Head). And, in principle, all agreed with the more recent introduction of a policy that restricted local students' visits home. These measures were deemed to be having a positive impact upon the dynamics of the college. Nevertheless, many local students commented that with home commitments and family support so close at hand, it was difficult to value the college community in the same way as 'overseas' students did. Some host Italian students at AD and many local students at SEA and WK commented similarly.

At WK, almost all IB students were resident on campus and it was interesting to find that a number of students who were not resident originally chose to become boarders because they felt they were *'missing out'* on activities and interaction. The majority of the college community at SEA was not resident on campus; however, there was general agreement amongst students and staff concerning the value of residential life,

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<sup>27</sup> The title given to a book of his findings published in 1968

particularly in terms of opportunities to promote international understanding and tolerance:

The day student who is open to the experience and involves him/herself in as much as possible can learn and ultimately understand a great deal about other nationalities, but there is nothing to compare with the opportunities the boarding experience offers for this kind of learning... students and staff who are not resident are often not involved in anything here after four [p.m.]; for the rest of us some really formative stuff often goes on until the early hours of the morning. (SEA04MT)

This study produced findings very similar to a large body of research which has considered the merits of residential education versus day school education<sup>28</sup>. Despite the fact that SEA used a number of strategies to give day students '*a taste of residential life*', including Project Week and some shared facilities in boarding residences, research data consistently indicated that there were distinct differences between the learning experiences of UWC boarders and those of UWC day students.

With some notable exceptions, the data revealed that the way in which boarders and day students thought of and involved themselves in college life differed. For example, the majority of students questionnaired attributed importance to all of the achievements listed in questionnaire item K1<sup>29</sup>, however there were significant differences<sup>30</sup> in the way in which resident and day students ranked these achievements in terms of importance. While 65% of all students questionnaired attributed '*great importance*' to '*a good academic education and qualification*', smaller percentages of day students than boarders rated other achievements as highly.

All questionnaire respondents, whether day students or boarders, recorded increases in their international understanding and tolerance towards others as a result of their UWC experiences (Q. Items D2&4); however it was interesting to note that a significantly smaller percentage<sup>31</sup> of day students than boarders questionnaired indicated that

<sup>28</sup> Most studies have been based on university education, e.g. Feldman and Newcomb 1969; Chickering 1974; Astin 1977

<sup>29</sup> i) a good academic education or qualification, ii) international understanding, iii) tolerance towards others, iv) social life, v) awareness of own country, culture and race, vi) environmental awareness, vii) political awareness, viii) awareness of humanitarian issues, ix) acting on ideals, x) access to good universities, xi) knowledge of world current affairs

<sup>30</sup> Differences were significant at the 0.05 level in each case

<sup>31</sup>  $p = 0.01$

international understanding and tolerance involved '*understanding differences*' (Appendix IX, Table VIII and IX, Q. Items D1&3)<sup>32</sup>.

On the whole, boarders participated in more college activities (on and off campus) than day students, were more commonly found instigating and leading college activities, spoke more positively of their college ethos, and interacted more widely and more regularly with college staff and fellow students. Differences between boarders' and day students' college experiences and the emphasis that students, graduates and teachers placed on the potency of residential life suggested that residency, despite periodic difficulties with its intensity, was highly conducive to meeting the movement's aims.

### **Making sense of college life**

All UWCs offered many varied and challenging opportunities for their students to encounter and participate in socio-political issues and processes, especially via residential life. These opportunities often exposed students to new knowledge, perspectives and behaviour that challenged them to identify, question and deliberate upon their own. However, qualitative data indicated that students' responses to these encounters were often naïve and fickle. UWC staff tended to be of the view that these responses were generally characteristic of adolescence. However, there were also indications in the research data that limited understanding of socio-political concepts and processes, as well as too few structured opportunities to make sense of college life may offer alternative explanations.

For example, many students' ideas of democracy, especially within the college context, constituted notions of 'majority vote' and social equality (i.e. communities governed 'by the people', rather than 'for the people'), which were linked to ideas of a fair compromise ('*meeting halfway*', '*accommodating everyone's point of view*') and harmony ('*finding something that everyone is happy with*'). Frustration and indignation, even disillusionment, were often expressed when events in college life (including community service experiences) did not abide by these notions.

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<sup>32</sup> 7% of day students, compared with 44% of boarders, questionnaired indicated that international understanding involved '*understanding differences*' and 5% of day students, compared with 54% of boarders, indicated that tolerance involved '*understanding*'

Similarly, students across the movement appeared to take a rather simplistic view concerning the development of international understanding. The vast majority of questionnaire respondents believed that any fixed and relatively exclusive student groups – referred to as ‘*cliques*’ - hindered international understanding (Q. item J2). However it became apparent that the groups that students referred to as cliques were rarely characterised by a single nationality and in fact appeared to be a natural consequence of the process of developing international understanding itself.

Language and personal interests were the most common reasons given for the existence of cliques in each college (Q. item J1). Some students interviewees explained that as most aspects of college life required them to deal with diversity and communication difficulties, they sometimes felt the need to be with those who spoke their first language or shared their interests in their free time. Although this evaluation found no other indications that these groups hindered the development of international understanding, most students, whether members of perceived cliques or not, felt the process of developing international understanding required as much interaction as possible.

A UWC graduate reflected:

At an age when we were just waking up to politics and full of idealism, college life turned up some pretty contentious issues. Our responses were naive and pretty simplistic, ... there was never really enough time or enough venues to chew things like that over.

(AW03FG<sup>88</sup>)

Data presented in Chapter Four has illustrated that learning in most UWC classrooms was rich with opportunities for students and teachers to think critically and reflectively about the theories of each discipline and how they related to one another. However, while students in all UWCs were provided with a wealth of opportunities to acquire knowledge and experience outside the classroom, very little provision was made for what Inlow (1972: 197) called ‘...*the noblest service that education can render to value building*’. On acquiring knowledge and experience, Inlow advocated that students should be guided to ‘*analyze it, integrate it, postulate about it, conclude from it, and reflectively assess it at every point of contact with it*’. Despite Sutcliffe’s acknowledgement that young people are ‘*able and anxious to evaluate their own*



*experiences*' (1987c: 10), practice in UWCs appeared to support Schön's (1983) view that there is a common desire amongst educators to avoid the uncertainties of the real world by remaining at a level of abstraction.

Research data concerning UWC students' service experiences illustrated the importance of exploring links between '*theory and practice*', '*rigor and relevance*'<sup>33</sup> particularly well. Student and graduate interviewees readily listed the skills they had learnt and the self-confidence they had acquired through service experiences; however, they tended to use anecdotes to convey the real power of the service experience for them. There was a very apparent emotional reaction running through most of the anecdotes they shared, which students and graduates generally had some difficulty articulating about. Where feelings were expressed, they were often in terms of privilege ('*It makes you realise how lucky you are*'), charity ('*You have to do your bit to help those less fortunate than yourself*'), or powerlessness ('*You do what you can to help, but the depressing reality is the world is an unfair place*').

These findings are similar to those produced by research on service learning in American universities conducted by Delve *et al.* (1990). They concluded that these were inevitable responses to service experiences that did not include regular, direct and systematic reflection. Under these circumstances, students are rarely encouraged to question or reflect upon the social, political, economic or environmental circumstances that give rise to the need for their service, and consequently, active citizenship appears to constitute an accepting and charitable response to 'the way the world is'. Kennedy (1997: 3) believes that it is this inability to '*...meld together civic knowledge, civic megatrends and civic realities*' that prevents citizenship education from '*...speaking to young people*'.

The head at AW conceded:

The thing that is really missing from the UWC experience is the reflection and evaluation phase... the only period for reflection is the summer holiday.

As discussed in Chapter Four, the IB's Theory of Knowledge [ToK] course was designed to encourage critical reflection on '*the knowledge and the experience of*

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<sup>33</sup> Schön 1983 and 1987

*students both in and outside the classroom*<sup>34</sup>. But while the evaluation established that ToK resulted in students being more enquiring and sceptical about information and in making meaningful connections between the theory of different academic disciplines, on the whole this subject did not constitute a regular venue for students to reflect upon and make sense of their everyday experiences. In this respect, Richards' (1992) study of service learning in UWCs concurred with the findings of this evaluation.

Several colleges were actively seeking more time in the college programme and more space in the college environment for reflective thought; for example, AW was planning the construction of a '*Light Sanctuary*' for '*reflection, meditation and prayer*'. However, while it was clear that some opportunities for sanctuary and solitude would be welcomed by many UWC staff and students, there appeared to be a greater need for structured and regular opportunities for reflection, which supported students in the process of making connections between their theoretical and experiential learning.

The research findings presented here have also demonstrated the importance of this reflection being informed by an adequate base of theoretical knowledge concerning political, social and environmental concepts and processes. Where this knowledge was limited, opportunities for students to consider and question the relationships between thought and action were inhibited. Under these circumstances there appeared to be more likelihood that students would '*jump on the bandwagon*' concerning certain issues without recognising the broader obligation and commitment that constitutes valuing, for example, human rights or justice.

### **Concluding comments: the potency of college life**

This chapter has established that learning experiences outside the classroom have a significant impact in relation to UWC's aims and that some of these experiences are perceived to have more influence than classroom learning. National and cultural events, camps, expeditions and Project Week, and service were each identified by students as having a very significant impact on the development of international understanding and tolerance. However, it was the intense, engaging and varied nature of residential life that was referred to most in this respect.

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<sup>34</sup> IBO guide for ToK, 1994: 3

It became apparent that when students, graduates and staff spoke of the influence of residential life, they were seldom just referring to the experience of sharing a dormitory or living in a ‘cubie’ (WK). In fact, their discussion of residential life usually referred more holistically to communal life on campus and the roles and relationships within it. The spirit of college life was referred to repeatedly and it became clear that many of the norms and expectations that applied in the classroom extended to out-of-class activities and interactions as well. A notable exception to this ‘cross-pollination’ was found in the way that the questioning and reflective approach encouraged and facilitated in academic learning did not apply to learning experiences outside the classroom.

However, in most respects, the spirit of college life was clearly a positive and potent influence upon learning in UWCs. The emphasis placed on what was often referred to by research participants across the movement as the ‘*UWC spirit*’ indicated that informal learning experiences, related to the way in which individuals interacted with day-to-day activities and with one another, were more influential than the structure, content and organisation of the curriculum. Hence much of what can be understood about the potency of residential life and the more holistic effect of life in college appeared to relate to the way in which the colleges functioned as communities. Chapter Seven will examine this finding further, while Chapter Six considers the implications of both the formal and informal learning experiences for graduates in post-college life.

## Chapter Six

### The Influence of the UWC Experience in Post-College Life

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In this chapter, the lasting influences of a UWC education upon the lives of the movement's graduates are considered. The chapter begins by discussing the difficulties of measuring the long-term impacts of education and the implications of this for an evaluation of this kind. The expectations of UWC graduates are examined and compared with examples of the ways in which graduates felt their lives had been influenced by their UWC education. But, perhaps most significantly given the agreements reached about the importance of researching the process of a UWC education as well as its outcomes<sup>1</sup>, this chapter considers the relationships between UWC college experiences and the life styles and life choices of the movement's graduates.

#### The difficulties of measuring the long-term impacts of education

More than three decades of personal and financial investment in UWCs has prompted a growing interest in the effectiveness of their educational venture. As a result, the movement has found itself under increasing pressure to provide evidence in the form of clearly delineated and demonstrable '*returns*'<sup>2</sup> on the investments made. To this end, a large scale survey of UWC graduates was conducted by the UWC Network<sup>3</sup> in 1992.

The survey focused on readily-measurable trends in the further education and career pursuits of UWC graduates. Its findings<sup>4</sup> were supplemented by information stored on the Network database and included facts such as 90% of survey respondents had obtained a first degree, commonly from a 'prestige' university in the western world; 41% of respondents over the age of thirty-five had proceeded to post-graduate qualifications; and the majority of UWC graduates were employed in '*community/social*' or '*business services*' vocations<sup>5</sup>. However, these findings did little

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<sup>1</sup> After a number of preliminary meetings between the Institute of Education and those commissioning the research, it was agreed that the utility of the evaluation would be enhanced considerably by examining not only *what* UWCs were achieving, but *how* they were doing so, in order that the research findings could also provide insights to inform and improve practice (see Chapter 1 for further discussion)

<sup>2</sup> Terminology used with reference to graduates in a publicity pamphlet produced by UWCIO (1991: 3)

<sup>3</sup> An association of students, graduates and staff of all UWCs (see Appendix V for further details)

<sup>4</sup> The survey's findings were based on questionnaire returns from 43% of UWC's graduate body in 1992 (N=12,749)

<sup>5</sup> *UWC Network Directory* (1992) and the *UWC Network Survey* report (1993)

to satiate the majority of interested parties for whom UWC is an investment in idealism.

The difficulties of measuring the enduring effects of education are reflected in the nature and the paucity of research conducted on this subject. In the field of international education, there have been a small number of studies made of graduates of international schools or overseas education (e.g. Cotterell and Useem 1994, Willis *et al.* 1994). Most have focused on the educational and vocational choices of graduates and have resulted in similar findings to those of UWC. Investigation of the affective impact of international schools has been limited and ultimately cautious about making direct links between the impacts identified and the experience of an international education. Cotterell and Useem (1994) were able to say little more than that graduates involved in their study felt 'different' to peers who had not been educated in an international school or overseas and were able to relate more easily to a diversity of people. The findings of a longitudinal study of graduates of an international school in Japan conducted by Willis *et al.* (1994) provided more insights. However, the researchers were only prepared to relate the traits<sup>6</sup> of what they called a 'transnational or transcultural identity' to significant experience of cultures other than the graduates' own in their 'formative' years.

In 1995, a small scale study conducted by Hayden and Thompson<sup>7</sup> appeared to be forging new inroads by beginning to unpick the concept of an 'international attitude' for university students recently graduated from an 'overseas [school] education'. In response to a Likert-type scale, its research participants indicated that they had a greater inclination towards tolerance of others' views and practices and that they maintained a strong sense of their own national identity (1995c). The full scale study that followed did not continue this investigation of graduates' attitudes, instead it focused on students between the ages of sixteen and eighteen, who were still being educated at international schools. While the findings of the subsequent study, referred to in previous chapters of this thesis, have made an important contribution towards

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<sup>6</sup> Traits such as being adaptable, open, tolerant, confident, accepting, sensitive, insightful, skilled at listening and making choices, self-reliant, objective, empathetic and broad-minded

<sup>7</sup> This study was carried out in order to gather a preliminary data set upon which a larger scale project was based. It was developed by the Centre for the Study of Education in an International Context at the University of Bath and its research participants were first year 'overseas' undergraduates at the university. The undergraduates were described as an 'opportunity sample' and therefore no attempt was made to extrapolate from the study's findings to a wider context.

developing understandings of international education in action, the investigation of post-school impacts has continued to be neglected.

Similarly, studies made of values education offer only limited insights. While there has been much interest in measuring moral development, from sequential stages of moral thought to various analyses of the growth of the person (Morill 1980), the long-term outcomes of values education, especially in relation to any influences upon individuals as *'agents of social control'*, have not been evaluated (Emler 1996: 117).

### ***What this evaluation has to offer***

The study of UWC graduates offered an important opportunity to develop new understandings in the aforementioned fields of research, however, the route to those understandings was problematic. It appeared unlikely that the true significance of UWC movement's effectiveness would be found in readily-measurable trends in further education and career achievements, or even in the much reported accomplishments of *'the movement's stars'*<sup>8</sup>. This evaluation needed to establish, in a more substantial sense, whether a UWC education impacted upon the way graduates led their lives and the people they had become. However, as Heater (1990: 205) has pointed out, *'...how far adult citizens are measurably the products of their schools is a controversial issue'*, not least because of the difficulties in isolating the influence of the school from the many other influences upon children and adults. On these grounds, it was evident that acquiring valid insights into the post-college effects of a UWC education could not constitute seeking clear-cut, causal relationships.

In an effort to ensure the validity of the data gathered by this evaluation, explanations of the impact of UWC learning experiences in post-college life were expressed as they were perceived by the graduates themselves via exploratory and in-depth interview techniques. For this purpose, sixty graduates were interviewed formally (see Appendix X, 2) and others contributed in a more informal manner as they were encountered during the course of the evaluation. As expected, graduates, especially those who had graduated from their UWC more than five years prior to this research, often found it difficult to distinguish between the influence of their UWC experience and other experiences in life. However, they appeared very clear about where their UWC

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<sup>8</sup> Drawn from an informal discussion with a member of staff at UWCIDO, referring to a leading heart surgeon, a famous microbiologist, Denmark's Woman of the Year, and the Director of Oxfam's operation in Pakistan

education had been one of the factors of influence upon their lives. Therefore, despite the complexity of the data produced, it did establish a picture of the wealth, the diversity, and, often, the subtlety of the movement's achievements.

### **Expectations of UWC graduates**

UWC's aim is to encourage active citizenship, people who take a responsibility for making a difference in the world. (UWCIO 1994: 1)

A shared confidence and expectation in the capacity of UWC graduates to '*make a difference in the world*' was very evident within the movement. Most students and graduates recalled becoming aware of post-college expectations from their earliest contact with UWC. Many spoke of the influence of slogans commonly used in the movement's publicity in which graduates were referred to as, for example, '*future architects of peace*' (UWCIO 1995). Some interviewees recalled the messages conveyed in selection interviews and activities. These messages often referred explicitly to the '*privilege*' of a UWC education and the obligation to bring the benefits of it back to their own country.

Most UWC student and graduate interviewees felt that a sense of post-college expectations also arose through their interaction with college life. Again the words '*privilege*' and '*debt*' arose repeatedly, but in this context, it was far less a message conveyed to students and far more an intrinsic response to the opportunity itself, particularly where scholarship assistance had been awarded. However, while only 5% of students questionnaired stated that they were '*not aware*' of any UWC expectations of their post-college life (Q. Item L2), qualitative data illustrated that students and graduates generally discussed the movement's expectations of them in the very broad and relatively undefined terms.

On the subject of the movement's post-college expectations, most students and graduates involved in this research referred to the ultimate goal of a more peaceful, just and understanding world, rather than specific tasks, roles and responsibilities. Most heads of colleges endorsed the generality of these perceptions, as well as the non-prescriptive nature of the movement's long-term aims:

We want them to have a sense of mission... but we don't want to prepare them for a guilt trip, so we say we want them to have an impact in the world... without saying how.

(PC Acting Head)

Like Hahn, the UWC movement and individuals within it seemed comfortable about expressing their aims in terms of the realisation of certain values and ideals. However, with the exception of a commitment to service, they seemed reluctant to specify the means by which they believed these ultimate goals should be reached. Given this stance, any evaluation of UWC's long-term impacts is an essentially open-ended task, guided only by the movement's broadly stated ideals and an abundance of slogans and mottoes intended on the whole for publicity purposes.

Under these circumstances, the movement and other interested parties have been left with the rather overwhelming task of attempting to establish whether UWC has made '*an effective contribution to world peace*' or '*a unique impact on the future leadership of our world*'<sup>9</sup>, as well as an on-going sense of anticipation which was evident in the frequently expressed opinion that '*UWC is a long term investment. The movement is still too young to see its influence on the world.*' (WK02FG<sup>83</sup>). This situation has prompted some to query whether '*...there might be some merit in setting ourselves and our graduates some achievable targets*' (LPC Head) and others to suggest '*Let us give them noble ideals but feasible dreams*' (Thor Heyerdahl<sup>10</sup>).

### ***Promoting the movement's ideals***

There appeared to be no doubt amongst most students and graduates that their UWC education had an ultimate social purpose and that it was intended that they should *actively* demonstrate their learning in post-college life. But there was a division of opinion amongst students questioned concerning the general manner in which they were expected to achieve this. Questionnaire respondents were asked to select a phrase<sup>11</sup> which they felt best represented their perceptions of what the movement expected of them in life after UWC.

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<sup>9</sup> UWCIDO 1996b.

<sup>10</sup> Thor Heyerdahl was Patron of UWC's International Council at the time of this evaluation

<sup>11</sup> These phrases were direct quotations drawn from student interviews

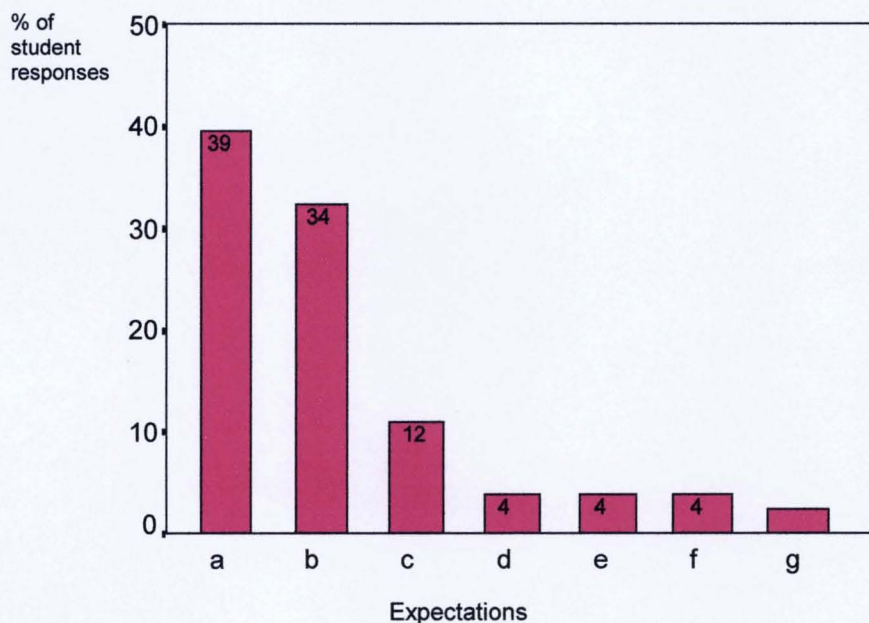


Table X illustrates that the majority of all students related UWC's post-college expectations to active promotion of the movement's ideals, but it also reveals that students were divided about whether they were expected to promote the ideals in 'small every day ways' or 'have a major impact to make the world a better place'.

**Table X**  
**Students' questionnaire responses to seven items representing**  
**perceptions of UWC's expectations of its graduates**

Figures are expressed as percentages of respondents

(Q. Item L2) N = 551



a = 'I think UWC would like me to live by the ideals promoted here in small everyday ways'

b = 'I think UWC would like me to have a major impact to make the world a better place'

c = 'I think UWC would like me to tell other people about UWC and their ideals'

d = 'I am not aware of anything UWC would like me to do when I leave here'

e = 'I think UWC would like me to go out and enjoy life in any way I choose'

f = 'I think UWC would like me to give something back eventually, perhaps by giving some money for scholarships'

g = 'I think UWC would like me to get into university and that's it'

Qualitative data suggested that variations in perceptions of UWC's post-college expectations may be partially accounted for by differing, and often mismatched, expectation messages conveyed more generally throughout UWC selection, college and post-college encounters:

We say "It's up to you, we wouldn't like to specify what you do with your life" and then in the next breath, "Get into the best universities and look at this graduate who has become a diplomat and this one who works for the World Bank". We tell them "You can live by these ideals in everyday ways, leadership doesn't have to mean a politician or world leader" and then we openly panic about how few visible figures we've produced to entice the donors. (AW03FT)

There were other expectation messages that appeared similarly mismatched. For example, notions of citizenship and promoting international cooperation '*throughout their lives*' (UWC Guidelines 1983: 3) contrasted with the frequently expressed opinion that graduates should not be expected to have '*an influence*' until their '*middle years*' (Peterson 1987: 5). The movement's officially stated policy '*to encourage students to return home for their higher education wherever possible*'<sup>12</sup> appeared to be challenged by the fact that the information and advice offered in UWCs was biased heavily towards higher education opportunities in Western Europe and North America. And expectations of '*active idealism*' appeared to be belittled by the fact that UWC's contact with its graduates focused predominantly on the movement's needs in terms of fund-raising and student selection.

### ***The influence of personal and parental expectations***

Given the variation that the research data demonstrated in perceptions of UWC's post-college expectations, it was interesting to find that the majority of all students questionnaired indicated that personal and parental expectations had *most* influence over them; a total of only 20% of respondents rated any other source of influence listed more highly (Q. Item L1a)<sup>13</sup>. Furthermore, as Table XI (overleaf) illustrates, these personal and parental expectations focused predominantly on two areas of achievement.

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<sup>12</sup> Information sheet provided with the official UWC application form

<sup>13</sup> Fellow students - 8%; future place of study or work - 4%; academic staff - 3%; UWC Organisation - 2%; all other sources listed each received less than a 1% response rate

**Table XI**

**The source and nature of expectations which students questionnaired  
indicated had most influence upon them**

Figures are expressed as percentages of the total response to these questionnaire items

N = 525 (Q. Item L1a&b)

		<b>Expectations</b>		
<b>Source</b>		<b>Academic Achievement</b>	<b>Happiness</b>	<b>Other</b>
	<b>Personal</b>	27%	21%	6%
	<b>Parental</b>	15%	9%	2%
	<b>Other</b>	9%	6%	5%

Research data indicated that the vast majority of UWC students and graduates involved in this research had high expectations of themselves and optimistic expectations of their futures. As the data presented in Table XI shows, most UWC students, who responded to the questionnaire, prioritised their personal future above other concerns and expectations. In this sense they were very similar to the adolescents who took part in a study conducted by Hicks and Holden (1995) in British schools<sup>14</sup>. Hicks and Holden found that the majority of eighteen year olds involved in their research had two priorities – a good education and a good job – and that these concerns for their personal futures consistently outweighed their interest in local, national or global futures.

UWC graduate interviewees, especially those in their twenties and thirties, were similarly focused on their personal futures, chiefly their responsibilities to their further education, careers and families. However, these findings should be considered in the context of two further findings arising from qualitative research data: i) UWC students and graduates often considered these personally oriented expectations consistent with the movement's ideals and ii) these expectations usually did not exclude other intentions and activities that students and graduates related to the movement's ideals. As the data presented in the remainder of this chapter will illustrate, graduates often found that the pursuit of personal interests was compatible with their commitment to the movement's ideals or could occur alongside them.

<sup>14</sup> The 'Global Futures Project' was a collaboration between the University of Exeter and the University of Bath. It was designed to investigate young people's views of the future and, for this purpose, the researchers collected data from almost 400 children in British schools in 1994.

## The transition from UWC

You leave [UWC] believing that you are going to do something special for the world one day. (LPC03FG<sup>94</sup>)

The research data indicated that most graduating students did appear to ‘*go out into the world believing they can make a difference*’ (UWCIDO 1996a). A sense of responsibility to use their UWC learning experience for more than their personal benefit was evident amongst almost all students and graduates involved in this research. In fact, the research data revealed that many students left their UWCs with highly ambitious and idealistic aspirations for ‘*a better world*’. One graduate commented: ‘*Many of us thought we were going to save the world*’ (AW04MG<sup>85</sup>).

Questionnaired two months before the end of their UWC education, 92% of second year student respondents<sup>15</sup> intended to reside in their own countries in post-college life, but 22% of these students stated that they planned to return home after completing further study abroad and 41% felt their return would be at some unspecified point in the future (Q. Item I)<sup>16</sup>. The data established that the next stage in life for most graduating students was higher education and for many this constituted study at a Western European or North American university.

### *Transition experiences*

Most graduate interviewees felt their UWC experience had prepared them well for university life, especially in terms of their academic attainment, the style of learning and dealing with life away from home. However, only eight of the graduates involved in this research found the transition from their UWC to the next stage in life unproblematic. The remainder of graduate interviewees (52) remembered the sadness and loss that they felt on leaving their UWC. These feelings appeared to have been particularly intense for those graduates of small, fully residential colleges and were often referred to as the ‘*UWC Blues*’.

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<sup>15</sup> 92% of second year student questionnaire respondents = 232 students

<sup>16</sup> In some cases this choice was determined by national circumstances, e.g. recognition of the IB qualification, specific study and career opportunities, refugee status

As Hahn had proposed, it was apparent that many UWC graduates attempted to ‘*carry the atmosphere of [their] school community to [their] homes*’<sup>17</sup> or to the next stage in their lives. Graduate interviewees often recalled failed attempts to, for example, reproduce similar bonds of friendships, find the same sense of belonging or equivalent open-minded and caring attitudes in the initial period of post-college life. While these attempts offered further evidence of the quality of college life and its learning impacts, they also provided important insights into the implications of UWC experiences for graduating students.

Striven’s (1986: 198) analysis of the way in which Victorian schools attempted to be microcosms of society highlighted similar difficulties:

...the rewards of a tightly-knit society were not necessarily the best preparation for the uncertainties of adult life. Coupled with the intensity of adolescence, it seemed to many ex-pupils like a high point of experience to which the rest of life never really compared.

In this sense, the transition difficulties identified by this research were also very similar to those noted by other studies of international schools (e.g. Kobayashi 1986; Matthews 1988). However, while there was much evidence of nostalgia for the cosmopolitan and close-knit community life often found in international boarding schools, it was apparent that the sense of loss felt and the difficulties experienced on leaving a UWC appeared to be related more fundamentally to the UWC experience itself.

### ***Transition difficulties and the spirit of college life***

Analysis of the research data established that some of the key defining characteristics of UWCs were not only the aspects of college life that graduates recalled enjoying and valuing most, but also the ones that they most often associated with post-college difficulties. For example, many graduates felt that the highly idealistic, intellectual and sometimes physically remote college experience had encouraged them to feel ‘*disengaged from the real world*’ and somewhat ‘*superior*’.

Quantitative and qualitative data concerning students’ perceptions of their peers appeared to concur with graduates’ reflections. Student interviewees and journal

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<sup>17</sup> Hahn in Skidelsky (1969: 235)

writers often referred to an increasing sense of estrangement from their pre-UWC friends, particularly with respect to their attitudes and ways of life. And although responses to a questionnaire item that required students to rate their pre-UWC and their UWC friends on the same characteristic scales were generally oriented in the same direction for both groups of friends, qualitative data suggested that students often described their UWC friends as, for example, more interesting, active, mature, intelligent, and open-minded<sup>18</sup>.

While these findings may offer a further indication of the high calibre of students selected for all UWCs, they also provide some insights into the impact of the UWC experience and the transition difficulties experienced by graduating students as a consequence of this experience. For example, many graduate interviewees recalled being particularly judgmental of their post-college peers as a result of the UWC experience, often perceiving their attitudes as *'parochial'*, *'prejudiced'* and *'uncaring'*. Many spoke of how they chose to isolate themselves in the initial period of post-college life amongst *'a few like-minded people'* or *'UWC types'*. And although almost all of these graduates were adamant that they had maintained or increased a sense of their national identity, loyalties and values throughout their UWC experience, some encountered difficulties reintegrating into their home environment for similar reasons.

The Chairman of UWC's International Board felt that any educational enterprise that *'... aspires to effect change in the way that UWC does will inevitably produce individuals who will find it difficult to be one of the crowd and who will be charged with being members of an elite'*; however, graduates generally appeared to be concerned about the problems that ensued from their *'lack of humility'* on leaving their UWC. One graduate, who spoke very highly of her UWC experience, concluded:

...but above all I think it should be written into UWC's Mission that colleges should keep students humble. (AD05FG<sup>84</sup>)

On the subject of transition difficulties, many graduate interviewees also referred to a post-college realisation that *'it's not so simple in the real world'* (SEA02MG<sup>87</sup>). Most graduates, particularly those from small, fully residential UWCs, felt that the college way of life and relationships had left them with *'a very rosy picture of the way the*

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<sup>18</sup> The day students involved in this research usually made fewer distinctions between the two groups of friends

*world could be*' (SEA02MG<sup>87</sup>). Some graduates questioned whether the founding principle of uniting people by their common humanity was overemphasised at the cost of more realistic perspectives on human diversity and whether the selection of students with a prior commitment to the movement's aims exacerbated this situation.

A number of the research findings presented in this thesis have pointed towards the importance of maintaining a spirit of realism in college life, which encourages students to address the complexities and difficulties of '*real world*' issues and relations. However, the research findings concerning the transition from UWC to the next stage in life seemed to provide the most powerful indication of this need by demonstrating the ultimate implications of '*the heady, idealistic, high flying, and unreal college existence*' (AD Head).

### ***Transition difficulties and post-college expectations***

The eighteen year olds who took part in Hicks and Holden's research (*op.cit.*) were sceptical about their ability to bring about change, especially to improve the global future. Conversely, students and graduates involved in this research had a strong sense of their own and the movement's confidence in their capacity to '*make a difference in the world*'. However, despite highly ambitious and idealistic aspirations, students had some difficulty envisaging how they might make that difference in the personal reality of their post-college life.

Although it was clear that UWCs were achieving a great deal by encouraging their students to develop a sense of responsibility to play a role in affecting change and improvement in the world, concern to avoid prescriptive expectations of the movement's graduates and a desire to leave the two year experience with '*unwrapped ends*' and '*questions burning in their minds*'<sup>19</sup> resulted in an often wary approach to the subject of post-college life.

Most colleges invited graduates to talk to students about their experiences of '*life after UWC*' or organised staff-student discussion sessions on the difficulties of the transition period. Some graduates recalled that initiatives such as these provided some useful

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<sup>19</sup> Chairman of UWC's International Board

insights and tips, but most felt they could have been ‘*better prepared to build upon the [UWC] experience*’ (AC02MG<sup>90</sup>).

Graduates involved in this research often recalled their ‘*naive*’ demonstrations of idealism or ‘*UWC spirit*’ in the initial period of post-college life and the disappointing realisation that ‘*nobody cared*’. Nine graduate interviewees found that their initial attempts to apply their UWC learning ‘*ostracised*’ them from their new communities and many graduates described a period in which they reluctantly put most of their idealism ‘*on hold*’ in order to ‘*make sense*’ of their UWC experience in terms of its implications for their post-college life.

One graduate commented:

UWC installs the equipment, but doesn’t give you the instructions... You come out full of enthusiasm and idealism, but without any real sense of what you’re going to do with it. Most of the problems of that first year or so come from the fact that you just can’t see how to make it work. (PC12MG<sup>87</sup>)

While graduates generally expressed concern regarding transition difficulties, many college staff and some UWC personnel felt that these difficulties demonstrated the degree to which UWCs provided a taste of an alternative and better world and were, therefore, an inevitable part of the learning experience. Many maintained the position that students had to decide for themselves what their UWC experience would mean for their post-college lives and that anything more than supporting this process would be inappropriate.

An informal discussion with a large group of graduates attending PC’s Twenty Year Reunion suggested that this support needed to be more practical and substantive:

... of course it is right that UWCs don’t tell us what to do with our lives, but they could help students to work out what this [refers to UWC Mission] might mean for them wherever they end up after UWC, even to make some initial plans or contacts.

Heater (1990) supported this position. He proposed that teachers should bring their students to a concrete understanding of their potential roles in society:



Young citizens... must be equipped with information concerning the repertoire of participative activities that will be open to them... this teaching may be even more personalized by the teacher inviting each pupil to identify those civic matters in which he takes a particular interest and whose cause he would most wish to protect and advance.'

(1990: 337)

As the research findings presented in Chapters Four and Five have demonstrated, UWCs provided their students with a wealth of opportunities to find out about and to experience taking an active role as local, national and global citizens. However, developing awareness of the '*connectivity of knowledge and experiences with pupils*'... *present and future life-contexts as citizens*...' <sup>20</sup> appeared to have been neglected. For example, the merits of involving students in regular and structured reflection on college experiences such as service were discussed in Chapter Five, but found to be inadequately addressed in UWCs.

Some college staff and most graduate interviewees were of the opinion that there may be some merit in '*directing [our] graduates towards avenues for their idealism*' (SEA01FT) and the Head at RCN felt that the transfer of students' UWC learning to post-college life might be facilitated by formalising the idea of a '*third year option*':

I think the model here will be that we expect our graduates to give of themselves but with more support and direction from us... We don't want to be too precise, but we will be asking them to give a year or summer early on in their lives to work for the Red Cross or another organisation and hopefully that will consolidate their learning here and ease the transition of their idealism from UWC on into the rest of their lives.

At the time of this evaluation, some UWCs were providing interested students with assistance and information to plan a '*third year option*', but there were no specific expectations of students in this respect and only a small proportion of them chose to pursue this option each year. A significant number of graduates interviewed were in favour of some post-college activity of this kind, even of a relatively short duration. They felt that this option would smooth the transition of idealism into the real world and re-establish any momentum lost in that idealism by the fact that their UWC experience concluded on a note of self-interest (i.e. IB examinations).

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<sup>20</sup> Cairns (2000: 15)

The research data could only provide limited insights into the merits of involvement in this kind of post-college option; however, it was interesting to find that three of the eight graduates who described their transition from UWC as unproblematic had taken ‘*a year out*’ before university to travel and/or be involved in aid work. Two of these graduates felt that their readiness to ‘*move on*’ was entirely a consequence of the excitement and expectation they felt about their plans to ‘*get out there and really make a difference*’ (AC09FG<sup>85</sup>).

### **Making a difference in the world**

Although there was a period of as much as a year in which most graduate interviewees experienced some considerable doubt about how to apply their UWC learning experience in post-college life, most graduates felt that this did not ultimately discourage their commitment to use their UWC learning to ‘*make a difference in the world*’. In fact, it was interesting to find that many graduates referred to this period as a time of ‘*getting real*’ or ‘*rebalancing*’. The remainder of this chapter examines how UWC learning experiences manifest themselves after the problems of transition.

All graduates involved in this research readily presented long lists of knowledge and skills acquired as a result of their UWC experience and, despite national origins, country of residence, age and life experience, each declared a commitment to the ideals stated in the UWC Mission. All graduate interviewees stated that their UWC experience had had a formative and enduring impact upon their lives, but each was asked to reflect upon their values, their life choices and their current lifestyle in order to identify the nature of this impact. Inevitably, most graduates found it difficult to attribute certain personal characteristics, life choices or aspects of their life style to the influence of their UWC experience alone, but all interviewees were able to describe a wide range of ways in which they recognised the contribution their UWC learning experience had made to their lives. The influence of UWC experiences upon graduates’ lives appeared to fall broadly into three categories. Graduates spoke of:

Having a disposition for idealism

Acting on their ideals

Maintaining a lasting commitment to their ideals

### ***Having a disposition for idealism***

There was a great deal of consistency in the way graduates felt that their college experience had influenced their knowledge, skills and outlook on life. Almost without exception, graduate interviewees referred to the role that UWC college life had played in initiating or developing each of the following:

- an enjoyment and a tolerance of diversity and an awareness of commonality and interdependence;
- an interest in, an awareness of, and a sense of responsibility towards local, national and global matters (political, economic, social, and environmental);
- the confidence and ability to express oneself, listen and negotiate;
- a sense of responsibility for oneself and one's own actions;
- the confidence and skills to take a lead;
- a willingness to question conventions and a sense of obligation to challenge injustice;
- a willingness to rise to a challenge;
- and an ability to recognise and consider more than one perspective.

Many graduates, particularly the newly graduated, remarked upon the fact that they found the above characteristics far more evident in their own disposition and the dispositions of other UWC graduates (whatever their college) than in the dispositions of their non-UWC peers. For example, one graduate observed:

I'm not a politics or current affairs freak, but I'm constantly amazed by how little interest most people show in world news. They don't know what's going on and don't seem to care. (AD06FG<sup>86</sup>)

And the Head at LPC commented:

I hear people who interview applicants for the Chinese and Hong Kong universities find our students are outstanding in terms of their poise, their articulateness, their ability to address an issue, and their confidence to ask questions.

These perceptions were reinforced by research conducted by Wilkinson and Mulgan (1995). Their study of the values of British men and women between the ages of eighteen and thirty-four revealed that most show little interest or ownership in the

political system and tend to take a fatalistic approach to whether problems can be solved. They found that while many young people were prepared to support individual causes such as animal rights and women's rights to abortion, they generally took a pride in '*being out of the system*'<sup>21</sup> and were less willing than previous generations to sacrifice their personal freedoms for the collective good or to accept social responsibilities. Their findings were supported by similar studies in other countries, especially those in the western world.

In 1995, the findings of Wilkinson and Mulgan's research caused much concern in the United Kingdom and are said to have been a major impetus behind the government's moves to make citizenship education part of the National Curriculum. For this evaluation, however, they provide a model of the average young person in Britain that contrasts starkly with the findings presented here concerning the values and attitudes of UWC students and graduates. This contrast provides another indication that the young people leaving UWCs generally had a very different outlook on life by comparison with their non-UWC peers.

Nevertheless, a commitment to the values at the heart of UWC's Philosophy and Mission are not the sole preserve of UWC graduates, therefore it was interesting to note another interviewee's observations of the differences between UWC graduates and other '*like-minded*' university students:

I realised at university that the difference between UWC graduates and other people who have similar ideals is an awareness, a confidence and sense of responsibility which makes you want to act on your ideals not just talk about them. (AW03FG<sup>88</sup>)

This emphasis on the significance of action on the basis of one's values as opposed to talking about one's values echoes a position adopted by Schultz (1990: 92):

Expressed values take on meaning only when they are realized in a tangible form in the life of a person.

It also returns to the core belief underpinning UWC's expectations of its graduates. Research findings concerning the movement's history, its *raison d'être*, and the college

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<sup>21</sup> Wilkinson and Mulgan (1995: 106)

experience have demonstrated clearly that the *active implementation* of UWC learning was, and always has been, fundamental to the movement's aims. It was apparent that UWC's interest in its effectiveness did not relate to whether its graduates' attitudes, aspirations and intentions were in line with the ideals of '*peace, justice, understanding and cooperation*' as much as to whether these ideals were reflected in the way they conducted their lives.

### ***Acting on their ideals***

Many graduates used anecdotes of everyday life or critical landmarks in their post-college experience to illustrate the influence of their UWC learning. However, it became clear that while value commitments to peace, justice, understanding and cooperation *oriented* many of their life choices and aspects of their life styles, these values did not *determine* the way in which graduates expressed this commitment actively. For example, in the name of a commitment to peace, one graduate had taken leave from her career in order to assist with mediation work in the former Yugoslavia, another refused to comply with his legal obligation to participate in military service in his country of origin, and another taught her children the merits and skills of non-violent conflict resolution.

Although these examples demonstrated an absolute commitment to peaceful, non-violent relations, they also revealed the way in which personal circumstances often determined how graduates translated this value commitment into action. Other anecdotes exemplified the influence of human potential upon graduates' active expressions of their value commitments, as well as the way in which life choices and everyday events often presented graduates with dilemmas which required them to rank one value above another. For example, of five graduate interviewees who mentioned involvement in specific initiatives to improve race relations in their community or country, each described very different contributions determined by their personal or professional knowledge and skills, and another graduate resigned herself to implementing policies that were '*environmentally unsound*', because she felt that the opportunity her company had to provide employment and economic development in a poverty-stricken region justified the environmental cost.

***Maintaining a lasting commitment to their ideals***

Although one graduate interviewee commented frankly ‘*I’m afraid my attitude is I gave a few years to anti-apartheid work, my conscience is clear.*’ (WK05MG<sup>84</sup>), the remainder expressed a sense of responsibility to apply their UWC learning actively throughout their lives. One graduate explained:

You leave with a sense of responsibility to things beyond what you can put in the fridge or the bank. However you respond to that feeling, you can’t ignore it, it is a constant influence on the way you live. (SEA03MG<sup>80</sup>)

Most graduate interviewees’ idealism and associated value commitments appeared to have transcended and endured venue, time and circumstances; however, it was apparent that graduates’ thinking concerning these ideals and values had rarely remained static. In fact, graduates often associated shifts in thinking with shifts in the active interpretations they made of their ideals and values. Many graduate interviewees described how personal life experiences and, to a lesser degree, an awareness of national and global events had prompted various changes in their thinking and behaviour. For example, one graduate at the height of a career in corporate banking described how his thinking had altered concerning wealth, status and power:

For years after I left PC I thought wealth and status were the antithesis of altruism, but I have realised over the years that I can do a great deal to improve the lot of others in life by taking the opportunities that have come my way to improve mine. (PC05MG<sup>77</sup>)

In addition, some graduates described periods of cynicism or doubt that had caused them to ‘*pause and reflect*’, but not permanently abandon their value commitments. It became clear that just as AD’s Head felt ‘*One should be very cautious indeed about arriving at judgments concerning students’ personalities, abilities and potential at the time they leave the college*’, caution should also be applied in the same manner when considering the apparent nature of graduates’ idealism at any single point in their lives.

### **Living up to expectations**

All of the graduates who participated in this research described success in their post-college studies and/or careers. Nineteen interviewees were currently at university studying for a first degree or post-graduate qualifications; thirty-eight interviewees had been awarded a first degree and sixteen had acquired post-graduate qualifications. More than half of interviewees stated that their desire to make a difference in the world had played a part in determining their choice of studies/career and two graduates explained that they had changed careers to this end.

Most of the more mature interviewees were employed professionally in management or leadership posts and many of the younger graduates described leading initiatives in student life at university or at the beginning of their careers. Forty-nine of the sixty graduates interviewed were involved regularly in activities that they defined as *voluntary service* (e.g. shopping for the elderly, helping at the local school, assisting at a homeless shelter, involvement in UWC fund-raising or selection) and six interviewees had taken time out from their studies or careers to participate in aid work abroad. Most of the graduates encountered formally and informally during this research were widely travelled, though resident in their country of origin, and most spoke more than one language.

It is likely that Hahn would have been pleased to note the general lack of what he called '*spectatoritis*'<sup>22</sup> amongst these UWC graduates, but despite these and many other achievements, almost without exception graduate interviewees were concerned they had not made enough use of their UWC learning to date. When asked to respond to the UWC Mission, most graduates referred to any voluntary work they were involved in; mention of active idealism in other capacities usually only arose when prompted. For example, one graduate, who lamented how little time he had been able to give to voluntary work in his community, only mentioned the success of his efforts over many years to devise and implement new *environmentally-friendly* practices in a large, multi-national company dealing with toxic chemicals when directly prompted to consider his professional life.

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<sup>22</sup> Peterson defined this as '*The preference for watching other people do things rather than doing them one's self*' (Tribute to Kurt Hahn, UWC Review 1986: 6)

While a small number of graduates attributed this sense of ‘*not having done enough*’ to messages encountered at college reunions and in the UWC Journal and Network mailings, it appeared that graduates’ demanding standards and unfulfilled expectations usually derived from a personal desire to ‘*do more*’ and their own sense of what this should constitute. Much of the data relating to UWC graduates suggests that they held what Heater (1990: 244) has referred to as ‘*excessive expectations of [their] influence*’ in post-college life.

Although no data of this kind can be conclusive, there were indications that these expectations of influence had arisen i) from a lack of clarity amongst graduating UWC students about what their UWC education might mean for their post-college life, ii) from UWC’s reluctance to specify their aims in anything more than daunting end-goal ideals, and iii) perhaps intrinsically, from the ambitious and idealistic characters that UWC students tend to be. For most graduate interviewees, what they appeared to have resulted in was a sense of not having lived up to expectations and/or a stalling approach, which postponed their intention to live up to expectations until a point later in life.

Forty-one of the sixty graduates interviewed talked of doing more later in their lives when, for example, they had more power and status, an established career or less family commitments. Many also invested in the much promoted expectation that the cumulative impact of UWC graduates’ efforts to make a difference in the world would only be seen in years to come. In the meantime, some graduate interviewees felt that UWC’s local, national and international Networks could do more to rally the ‘collective idealism’ and ‘*rekindle a UWC spirit*’ amongst graduates internationally. One graduate suggested:

College life was all about a sense of shared mission. UWC could achieve a great deal if it revived that feeling amongst its graduates. At the moment they’re only really tapping this to raise scholarships. Imagine what could be achieved if the Networks rallied UWC’s thousands of graduates to get involved in global projects. With all the advances there have been in international communication since UWC began, the contemporary Network has so many more opportunities to make its presence felt in the world. (PC07MG<sup>76</sup>)



## **Consistency in output**

We certainly don't have the same depth of impact on every student. There's no consistency in output... I'm sure we fail some students. (AW Head)

By a process of 'snowball sampling'<sup>23</sup>, it was possible to collect data from a wide variety of UWC graduates including former fee-payers and scholars, former day students and boarders, and those who had enjoyed their UWC experience and those who had not. Despite this diversity, there was no evidence to suggest that the life choices and lifestyles of these graduates could be categorised on the basis of these differences (with the exception of the transition experiences discussed).

Three graduate interviewees reflected that their UWC experience had not been a good one overall. Equally, the research found very small numbers of students in each UWC who were consistently finding college life unpleasant. These students and graduates gave various reasons for their difficulties, such as long-term homesickness, the intensity of college life, some homophobic campus attitudes, difficulties with social relations, and a sense of campus '*claustrophobia*'<sup>24</sup>. However, in each case, students and graduates maintained that their UWC experience had enhanced their commitment to the ideals stated in the UWC Mission. And despite the differences found between the college experiences of boarders and day students, responses to the UWC Mission were very similar. A graphic example of the dangers of drawing conclusions about the impacts of college life on the basis of the differences identified in students' experiences was provided by the case of a former WK fee-paying, day student who had recently finished his studies in engineering and was joining a project to rebuild schools in Zaire:

The staff at Waterford would laugh if they could see me now. I was the biggest sceptic about the whole UWC thing. I was there for my IB and found international understanding a bit of a bore. It only started to make sense after I left. (WK03MG<sup>91</sup>)

There are a number of well-established measures of values, which claim to determine whether an individual rates one value above another (e.g. Allport *et al.* 1951, Rokeach 1973), however attempts to measure whether one individual holds a particular value

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<sup>23</sup> See discussion of sampling methods in Chapter One of this thesis

<sup>24</sup> Campus '*claustrophobia*' was associated with isolated, rural college settings

with more conviction or intensity than another individual does have proved problematic and controversial (Reich and Adcock 1976). Therefore, to say that the WK graduate mentioned above valued peace and cooperation more than the graduate who was teaching her children the merits and skills of non-violent conflict resolution would be extremely contentious. Similarly one cannot conclude validly that the graduate who resigned herself to implementing policies which were '*environmentally unsound*', because they were of benefit to employment and economic development in a poverty-stricken region did not value environmental protection. Each graduate interviewed was able to illustrate their active endorsement of the movement's ideals, but these examples have provided potent illustrations of the diverse, dynamic and sometimes, subtle ways in which value commitments can be expressed.

### **Concluding comments**

While it was apparent that UWC learning experiences had a formative and enduring impact upon graduates' lives, the research found that evidence of their influence was highly varied. Rather than attempt to catalogue a multiplicity of evidence offered by just sixty of the movement's graduates, the research findings presented in this chapter have exemplified the nature of this influence and the manner in which these UWC graduates were striving to '*make a difference in the world*'.

The research findings illustrated that the ways in which graduate interviewees conducted their lives were oriented by value commitments to '*peace, justice, understanding and cooperation*'. But it became clear that while there was a great deal of consistency in the way in which graduates described the influence of their UWC learning upon their knowledge, skills and dispositions, factors such as current circumstances, life experience, personal potential and priorities determined how graduates translated their value commitments into specific life choices and acts of idealism.

One graduate commented:

I think UWC is looking for a hook to hang this on. But it's impossible to distill the essence of the experience and its impacts - they're far too diverse. I wish there was an easy way to sum it up, it would have saved me hours of explaining over the years. (AC01MG<sup>73</sup>)

But while it has become clear that a product-oriented perspective upon the UWC enterprise had proved problematic, particularly where it was shaped by the much quoted slogans of current promotional material, there did appear to be a ‘hook’ upon which the many varied manifestations of UWC learning could hang. Just as citizenship education was found to be at the heart of the learning experience in all UWCs, the research data indicated clearly that the ways in which graduates described the influence of their UWC learning consistently related to notions of *responsible* and *active citizenship* in local, national and global dimensions. When the lives of the movement’s graduates are considered from this perspective, UWC’s achievements are not only apparent and extensive, but significant in terms of its official aims. One graduate asked in exasperation:

What is it that UWC wants us to do that we’re not already out there doing?

(PC01FG<sup>77</sup>)

This comment illustrates graphically the frustration and confusion that has acted as an obstacle to both the movement and individual graduates appreciating their achievements. It became increasingly clear that if students were encouraged to envisage their post-college life in terms of avenues for responsible and active citizenship, not only would essential scope for interpretation be maintained, but a framework for life-long achievement would be established.

## **Chapter Seven**

### **The Power of the UWC Culture**

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As established in Chapters Four and Five, the learning that was occurring in UWCs could be explained only in part by the formal curriculum. This evaluation's data constantly set a trail back to the less tangible and more informal influences upon learning, which were related to the ways in which individuals interacted with day-to-day activities and with one another. As discussed in Chapter One, the import of the informal aspects of learning has commonly been accepted, especially since the research of Rutter *et al.* in 1979. Their study of twelve secondary schools in the Inner London Education Authority found practices such as displaying pupils' work on the wall and entrusting pupils with responsibility correlated with good examination results, pupil behaviour and pupil attendance. They clustered these and other informal influences under the heading of 'school ethos', but were criticised for not theorising on the relationship between these informal influences and pupils' experience (Strivens 1986).

With the findings of the Rutter study and other corroborating studies in mind, it was expected that the informal curriculum would play a role in learning in UWCs and therefore, this evaluation of the colleges was designed to gather evidence about learning in both its formal and informal dimensions. However, the richness of the data concerning the informal curriculum and the potency of its impact could not have been predicted. Previous chapters have considered the impact of these informal learning experiences. This chapter examines why these learning experiences were so influential. Analysis of the evaluation's data in this respect occurred during the process of writing this thesis and therefore much of the discussion in this chapter is presented for the first time.

#### **A framework for analysis**

Research participants' explanations of their UWC education made clear that they attributed meanings to both their formal and informal learning experiences and that these meanings determined the impact of these experiences. It became apparent that an

understanding of the potency of informal learning experiences lay in identifying these meanings. Schein (1991: 244) argued that the meanings given to every day activities by members of an institution or organisation '*may not be decipherable without understanding a deeper set of phenomena that tie them together*'. He suggested that these phenomena were part of an organisation's culture and constituted '*basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members of an organization*' (1992: 6).

The terms culture and ethos have been used with reference to what underpins activities and relationships in educational institutions for many years (Waller 1932, Sarason 1971, Rutter *et al.* 1979, Strivens 1985, Stoll and Fink 1996). In a clutter of terminology and often indistinct meaning, Deal and Kennedy's phrase '*...the way we do things round here*' (1993: 14) has become common currency as a user-friendly analogy.

The aim here is not to enter into what Martin (1992: v) calls '*the conceptual chaos*' about the meaning of these terms. A review of the related literature establishes that they have proved difficult to define and that some ambiguity can and has to be tolerated in this respect. Indeed, Handy (1984) argued that such concepts cannot be defined precisely, because they involve subjective perceptions and feelings. However, for the purposes of data analysis and its discussion in this thesis, it has been necessary to settle upon loose working definitions.

Both Torrington and Weightman (1993) and Lawton (1997b) make distinctions between the two most commonly used terms, culture and ethos. Each suggests that culture is a deep concept encompassing the beliefs, values and behaviour of a group or an institution, whereas ethos is a more surface-level and '*...self-conscious expression of specific types of objective in relation to behaviour and values*' (Torrington and Weightman 1993: 45). These distinctions made a great deal of sense in relation to this evaluation's data, especially given the readiness and ease with which research participants talked about the spirit<sup>1</sup> or ethos of college life and the almost palpable quality of what they described even for an outsider, such as myself. On this basis, Deal

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<sup>1</sup> 'Spirit' was the term most commonly used by research participants in this evaluation to describe the feel, the mood or the way things were done in their college

and Kennedy's phrase (*op.cit.*) is not substantial enough to characterise culture, but appears more suited to the terms ethos or spirit.

The research findings of Nias *et al.* (1989: 10) supported these definitions in the sense that they found that what happened in schools was the result of deep-seated beliefs working their way to the surface through increasingly explicit layers:

Action, we could see, was governed by norms which were, in turn, an expression of values, in that they expressed staff members' views on the differential worth and utility of particular artefacts, opinions, activities, lifestyles and so on. But these values themselves appeared to be an expression of beliefs to which it was very hard for an outsider to gain access because, being shared and understood, they were seldom voiced.

These theoretical positions and research findings shaped the way in which analysis of data presented in this chapter was conducted. The framework adopted for analysis was based on this deep concept of culture, the aim being to look beyond the more accessible spirit or ethos of each UWC towards the values and beliefs that underpin it and the meanings that they give to learning experiences.

However it is important to state at this stage that, in line with the philosophical underpinnings of this evaluation, it was assumed that human beings structure their own view of the world, construct their own meanings and make the order in which they exist. So, while culture did appear to act, as Stoll (1999) suggests, as a lens through which group members viewed the world, it was understood to be a human invention developed through human interaction (Nias *et al.* 1989), which did not have an objective existence that could be observed. On these grounds, the analysis presented in this chapter, as in previous chapters, is based on how UWC was represented as a movement and on how individual research participants' represented their UWC experiences.

### **Gaining access to what lies beneath the UWC spirit**

Culture gives meaning to human activity, and hence identifying a school's culture is of central importance to understanding the effectiveness of its educational activities (Kainan and Shkolnik 1994). Lawton (1997b: 6) believes that to acquire a full

understanding of a school's culture, it must be analysed at three levels: *'behaviour (including the visible aspects of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment) being part of the surface culture (or ethos); fundamental beliefs being part of the deep structure of culture; with attitudes and values existing somewhere in between the surface culture and the deep culture, but overlapping both of them'*.

However, gaining access to the layers that lie beneath a school's ethos is notoriously difficult as they tend to constitute *'a learned pattern of unconscious (or semiconscious) thought... that silently and powerfully shapes the experience of people'* (Deal 1990: 132). These patterns of thought have often developed over a relatively long period of time and been passed on, modified and consolidated by practice, from generation to generation of the school community (Torrington and Weightman 1993). Therefore current day members of a school may find it difficult to explain why their school operates in the way that it does, because the beliefs upon which their school is established are now taken for granted and rarely articulated.

In some respects UWC does not conform with this model of institutional culture. The movement has always made explicit the origins of its educational enterprise and what its colleges set out to achieve. It was evident that new members to each of the colleges were left in no doubt that, based on the aspirations of its founders, UWC aimed to make a significant contribution towards developing understanding and cooperation between nations and cultures and towards the realisation of a more just and peaceful world. In fact, one of the criteria for selection of students was that they were able to demonstrate a commitment to or an understanding of these aims. But was it these manifest goals that determined, motivated and gave meaning to day-to-day activities and interactions in each of the UWCs?

Stoll and Fink (1996) have demonstrated that exploring cultural norms can provide a useful route into understanding school culture. They found that norms - the unspoken rules for what is regarded as customary or acceptable behaviour - underlay most aspects of behaviour in the schools they studied. In fact, they suggest that norms lie just below the surface of day-to-day activities and interactions and are, therefore, more accessible than deeper-seated values and beliefs.

Focusing on cultural norms proved to be a very successful approach in relation to the UWC data. By comparing and relating research participants' explanations of their activities and relationships, it was possible to identify a small set of norms generally shared within and between UWCs. These norms operated as what Rossman *et al.* (1988) referred to as '*sacred*' norms in the sense that they appeared to have been part of the way in which each college had functioned since it was established and had survived each generation of college community relatively unchanged. By '*peeling off the next layer of the onion*'<sup>2</sup>, it was possible to see that these norms were based on certain commitments and understandings relating to value positions and beliefs, which had been established within each college community and could be traced back to the movement's founding principles.

Some evidence of norms that were specific to certain colleges or even groups within colleges was also found. However in-depth analysis of the sub-cultures of individual UWCs lay beyond the scope of this evaluation. Instead, given the remarkable similarities found in the ways in which many research participants explained their UWC experience, attention was directed towards the strength of what was shared between UWCs, henceforth referred to as the UWC culture. In this sense culture was considered holistically, but that is not to say that the ambiguities, inconsistencies and issues upon which there was not full consensus were overlooked. In fact, they provided interesting insights into how the movement's culture had evolved and how it operated in each of the colleges. The sub-cultural differentiation, which did exist in various capacities across the movement, would merit further study.

The next section of this chapter outlines each of the shared cultural norms that were identified in the data and how these related to certain value positions and beliefs. Following Stoll and Fink's (1996) example, slogans have been added with the intention of conveying the core meanings that research participants attributed to activities and interactions influenced by these norms.

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<sup>2</sup> Stoll and Fink (1996: 92)



**Shared mission: *We have a goal***

Kurt Hahn's personal vision and charisma played a large part in beginning the UWC venture; however, such influences will rarely sustain an initiative as it evolves (O'Sullivan 1993). UWC's efforts to move beyond its association with Hahn in order to establish an independent identity had brought about changes in its form and activities (see Chapter Two). But, despite expansion, disparate locations and varied membership, the movement was striving to maintain a collective *raison d'être*, which differed little from its founding principles. For the contemporary movement, this *raison d'être* was represented by the UWC Mission (Appendix II), which was printed in most of the movement's publications and played an extensive role in terms of public relations and promotion. In other respects, it was also found to act as an official affirmation of belonging and shared direction for the various factions of the movement, which, in the light of on-going tensions over student admissions (see Chapter Three), had proved crucial:

Without the mission statement, the UWC movement means very little to us... we would not identify with descriptions of a model or a process. (SEA Head)

The students, graduates and teachers involved in this evaluation were familiar with the mission statement; however, the strong and shared sense of purpose evident in their explanations of their UWC experiences drew very little on their encounters with the statement:

I'm here because I believe in what we're trying to achieve... the stuff that comes with the application form and then the business of the interview, they tell you a lot about UWCs, but I don't think you really understand what it's about till you get here. (AD06FC<sup>2</sup>)

It became clear that the sense of mission felt by college members was derived mainly from the UWC experience itself and that it was based, in part, on a notion of an end goal in the form of a better world. Much like the official stance taken throughout the movement's evolution, students, graduates and teachers were reluctant to specify or unsure about their vision of a better world. Often they referred to a vague ideal of more peaceful, just and cooperative relations globally or suggested that their UWC community was a microcosm of a better world:

As bonds inevitably develop between people, they begin to recognise that this is just an example of what is possible on a much grander scale. (RCN02MT)

If we can live together harmoniously here, why not out there?<sup>3</sup>

But no matter how loose this notion of a better world was, it was perceived as central to activities in UWCs.

Occasions, such as the anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations, were referred to as times when college communities celebrated their shared goal. Some research participants even spoke of the way in which artefacts printed with the UWC logo and other familiar words or images acted as motivating reminders of what they were trying to achieve. Yet it was the way in which college relationships and interactions operated that received most emphasis. For example, the strong bonds of friendships established between students from often quite diverse cultures, and even the ritual of hugging as a form of greeting one another - most prevalent between student boarders on each of the UWC campuses - were referred to regularly to illustrate the goal of the UWC experience and its achievability.

However, the data collected during the course of this evaluation made clear that this shared sense of mission was not just related to an abstract notion of a better world, but also to the task of equipping students to make a significant contribution towards reaching this goal. Aims in relation to citizenship education, especially in its global dimension, determined much of what happened in UWCs and in this respect, international understanding and tolerance were the *leitmotifs* of the colleges.

As Tables VIII and IX (Appendix IX) illustrate, the act of demonstrating respect for one another was what students most commonly associated with international understanding and tolerance. However it was clear that respect did not mean deference, but operated in what Fogelman (1991: 96) calls '*the more philosophical sense of "respect for persons", the positive valuing of the personhood of others in all their complex difference and similarity*'. As one student explained:

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<sup>3</sup> A contribution to a group interview with second year students at WK, which received general agreement from other interviewees

If you respect someone, you're prepared to cooperate with them and you're not going to hurt them or treat them badly. (AW08MC<sup>2</sup>)

Again the data indicated, as Fogelman goes on to suggest, that such valuing and mutual respect were developed via the quality of relationships experienced in and encouraged by the college communities. For example, there was enthusiasm for finding out about one another's cultures and making international friendships; there was a strong sense of caring between members of colleges and towards their local communities and their environment; colleges operated on the basis that everyone had a say; and in most colleges notions of status were avoided – staff mixed openly with students and were not considered figures of authority. Implicit in these relationships and notions of respecting one another were understandings about and commitments to trust, caring, equal opportunities, human rights and justice. The following comments illustrate this point well:

I feel important here, valued, as if I have something special to offer. (RCN05MC<sup>1</sup>)

It's as if we're one big family. (RCN04FC<sup>1</sup>)

You spend time with someone – do service, go to class or just hang out – and she stops being an Israeli or a Spaniard or whatever, she becomes a person. You have things in common and things not in common, there are things you like about her and things you don't like about her, but you respect her because she's a person just like you. (AC02FC<sup>1</sup>)

Pring (1987) proposed that seeing others as persons, with views, needs and interests is fundamental to developing respect for them. This idea can also be related to the development of students' identities as global citizens; Enloe (1985:19) argued that the ideal of global citizenship can only become a reality when notions of 'them and us' are abandoned. He suggested that students must learn to see that '*a person is foremost not a particular group, race or nationality*'.

It would appear that students' experiences of developing international understanding support the view that while international understanding might be considered a value in itself, it is also a composite of several other values (Bridges 1997), among them justice, equality, respect, tolerance, caring and trust. Although UWC communities clearly

relished their diversity, these values operated as universally valid precepts on the basis of which the communities' plurality in other respects could be accommodated and valued. Fundamentally, for the success of the UWC venture, they provided a shared direction and purpose. The idea that there is a core of common humanity which can ally all people, despite their origins and beliefs, not only relates to UWC's founding principles, but also to contemporary concepts of global citizenship. As Enloe (1985: 19) pointed out:

... a global perspective deeply respects the rich diversity of human cultures... but also very clearly recognises that an appreciation for, and an understanding of, diverse cultural forms must be based on an awareness of what human beings have in common.

This evaluation's data suggested that there was a strong sense of shared mission within and between UWCs, which was represented by, rather than derived from the movement's mission statement.

Rosenhaltz (1989: 13) stated that:

... the hallmark of any successful organization is a shared sense among its members about what they are trying to accomplish.

The basic vision of a better world shared by college communities was consistent with the values that they lived by day by day. This consistency made the movement's end goal meaningful for college members and engendered motivation and commitment. It contributed towards the drive to be successful evident in each college or towards what many research participants called the 'gung-ho' attitude. This attitude made things happen, in other words affected progress and development.

### **Confidence in ourselves: *We can meet the challenge***

It was established in Chapter Three that UWC has never claimed to provide education for all. In fact, at the time of data collection, the movement associated its highly selective admissions procedures with its end goal. It was suggested that if UWC was to

have an impact on the world, then ‘*excellence in admissions*’ was required<sup>4</sup>. This view drew on a long tradition of selective entry to UWCs beginning with AC’s first admissions of ‘*carefully selected boys*’ (Stabler 1987: 213) and was rooted in the Platonic ideal of selecting and training ‘the best and the brightest’ to be future leaders, an ideal advocated strongly by Hahn.

This view dictated the nature of the selection process, but it became clear that it also influenced the way in which UWC students and graduates thought of themselves and gave meaning to many of their activities and interactions:

We came out of Pearson believing we were the chosen ones, the ones who were destined to do great things for the world. (PC09FG<sup>76</sup>)

It’s as if we’ve been hand-picked for the job. (LPC07MC<sup>2</sup> on the subject of UWC’s goals)

When student and graduate research participants discussed their UWC experience, there was generally some sense of having been chosen, of being special, or even of being part of an elite group. Some, mainly graduates, regarded this sense of worth as exaggerated and lacking in humility (see Chapter Six), others were overwhelmed by it, but most appeared comfortable with it and felt that they would meet perceived expectations<sup>5</sup>. This confidence appeared to relate to a *modus operandi* very evident in each UWC: students and staff encouraged one another to rise to the challenges of college life and perseverance and success were valued highly.

As a result of the movement’s selection criteria, the colleges were populated predominantly by academic high-flyers. Students and graduates talked of having always been successful in school or top of the class and many arrived at their UWCs with high self-esteem in this respect, so much so that some found it disconcerting to be amongst others of a similar calibre. But it appeared that the selection process and life in college often did much to enhance this sense of worth.

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<sup>4</sup> Chairman of UWC’s International Board, recorded discussion, January 1997

<sup>5</sup> Graduates often said they intended to ‘*make a difference*’ or meet UWC expectations later in life, but this deferral did not appear to effect their confidence about their ability to do so.

Winning a place, and often a scholarship, at a UWC from amongst large numbers of applicants worldwide, usually by way of a demanding selection process, was clearly a confidence boosting experience for most successful student applicants. However, explicit messages conveyed during the selection process also had much the same effect. Many students were told that they were to be ‘envoys’ for their country, that much was expected of them as a result of this opportunity, and that they had the special qualities needed to win a place at a UWC and/or to make a difference in the world.

On arrival at their UWCs, similar messages were rife in the induction programmes in each college. For example, during one research observation at SEA, a member of staff capitalised on the inevitable reluctance of an audience of new students to intervene in a mock experiment that involved placing tadpoles in a jar of water over a flame. He told them ‘*You’re here to make a difference... you’re not just here to talk, but to act... don’t succumb to moral apathy, make a stand!*’. Similarly, stories of key figures in the movement’s history and of UWC graduates were used to illustrate to students the tradition of achievement, or as Deal (1990: 137) puts it the ‘*models of virtue and vision*’, that they are expected to follow. One student explained:

You become very aware of the faith that is being placed in you. (AW04FC<sup>1</sup>)

However, day-to-day interactions and activities carried corresponding meanings for students. Many students and graduates involved in this research commented on the fact that they found themselves amongst ‘*like-minded*’ people, high-achievers who on the whole came from relatively privileged backgrounds<sup>6</sup>. In fact, Lockwood (1987: 142) observed that ‘*the kind of student who attends [a UWC] would be at home in any one of these schools*’. The character of student communities and the qualities encouraged and commended in each UWC suggested to students that in order to be a UWC student and be able to a ‘make a difference in the world’ one must take a lead, ‘stand up and be counted’, be intelligent, vocal, active, confident, assertive, and questioning. This finding was borne out by the fact that generations of graduates who participated in the selection process sought out the most confident and assertive candidates (see Chapter

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<sup>6</sup> Chapter Three established that although the aim of the scholarship programme was to enable students from all socio-economic backgrounds to win places at UWC, as academic achievement was a selection criterion for students and as there is a proven connection between socio-economic status and educational opportunity, the majority of applicants selected were from relatively privileged backgrounds

Three) and the minority of students admitted each year without these qualities felt under pressure to develop them (see Chapters Four and Five).

Although Hahn's concern for the 'plodder' or 'late starter' would very likely have made him opposed to the idea of UWCs being populated almost solely by academic high-flyers, in every other respect these qualities would have conformed with his notion of leaders or ideal citizens. Hahn was of the view that intelligence and social advantage made good leaders if they were not weakened by a sense of privilege (Skidelsky 1969); he supported the idea of '*noblesse oblige*'<sup>7</sup>.

Chapter Five established that traces of noblesse oblige were still found in the movement's culture, especially in the way that students in most colleges encountered and responded to service. Altruistic views of service and exclusive notions of citizenship are generally much criticised in the relevant literature. For example, Delve *et al.* (1990) argue for reciprocal notions of service in which there is no sense of charity, but rather an understanding concerning the equality and interdependency of citizens. Heater (1990: 334), on the other hand, contests that '*some individuals will have a greater propensity to lead and others, to follow*', but that equality and the principle of citizenship is secure if '*individuals who so wish have opportunities to exercise the functions of the elite citizen*'. In this respect there were contradictions within the culture of UWC. Equal opportunities and human rights were promoted and, in many ways, supported, yet the UWC opportunity was exclusive and the philosophy underpinning admissions upheld the view that only those with a propensity to lead will be prepared for those roles.

UWC communities shared a faith in their capacity to meet UWC's end goal, which was rooted in beliefs about the kinds of people that can '*make a difference in the world*'<sup>8</sup>, conceptions of the ideal citizen and exclusive notions of citizenship. Motivation, enthusiasm and achievement were engendered by this shared faith and fervent efforts were made to maintain it by ensuring that the 'right' kind of students were selected for UWCs. In fact, the suitability of students who had gained a place at a UWC without

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<sup>7</sup> Benevolent and responsible behaviour considered to be the responsibility of persons of high birth or rank

<sup>8</sup> UWCIO 1994: 1

meeting official selection criteria was constantly questioned, given the movement's aims.

**Shared responsibility for success: *We all have a contribution to make***

As previously discussed, interviewees often referred to the UWC movement as a growing group of like-minded people who would collectively make the world a better place. There was a shared expectation that every member of the movement had a responsibility to contribute, especially in post-college life, and as discussion in Chapter Six established, a strong sense of personal, rather than external, accountability to this expectation.

Pearce and Hallgarten (2000: 5) suggest that types of citizenship might be imagined on a sliding scale from 'individual/passive' to 'collective/active'. At one extreme of the scale is the consumer model of citizenship in which an individual's rights receive most emphasis and at the other end of the scale is a model of collective civic engagement in which communal responsibilities are the main focus. A comment made by one teacher interviewee represents a wealth of data that indicated that the model of citizenship promoted in UWCs was firmly at the collective/active end of such a scale:

Our philosophy is 'Think not what the world can do for me, but what I can do for the world'. (LPC02MT)

This is an interesting finding given that i) education for citizenship has been criticised in many parts of the world for its overemphasis on the rights of individuals at the expense of learning about their responsibilities (Musgrave 1994), and ii) there has been some concern that the tensions between the conventional self-interest of a school career and the more democratic interests of citizenship are too great for the two educational aims to operate side by side (Fogelman 1991).

From the movement's outset, a belief in the importance of educating for responsible citizenship has influenced the way in which UWCs have operated. Descriptions of the early years at Atlantic College provided by Sutcliffe (1983: 100) illustrate how by departing from the more formal disciplinary model of schooling favoured by Hahn and



prevalent in Britain at the time, the college used informal learning experiences to promote a sense of responsibility for oneself and others:

Our approach was to avoid student hierarchies and prefectorial systems at all costs, to accept and encourage female companionship, and in general terms to adopt an 'adult' view within prescribed limits towards such matters as smoking, alcohol and weekend visits away from College... responsibilities were serious ones, whether in the services, the activities generally, the numerous clubs and societies or the students council... authority was tied to specific responsibilities... and the expertise of the second-year students in the services and activities offered many opportunities for leadership in the instruction of the first-year students.

This evaluation's data indicated that the notion of personal and collective responsibility was still implicit in the social fabric of each college. Rules were socially agreed conventions, rather than a code of conduct originating from an unquestioned authority, and operated on the basis that they were obligations to one another and the community as a whole. Activities were often used to challenge students to work together and recognise their interdependency. Students were encouraged to be active in their academic learning drawing on and questioning a variety of sources, including one another. And even campus design and organisation promoted community bonds and responsibility in the sense that in most colleges all areas were accessible to staff and students, and in several, there were either no locks on doors or locks were not used.

However, it was the service ethic that did most to promote a sense of duty and responsibility amongst students. The UWC movement stated that '*...serving others is the most fundamental ideal of life at a United World College*'<sup>9</sup>. In line with this rhetoric, it was apparent that the majority of staff and students in most UWCs shared a sense of the importance and value of service, which transpired actively in the time and resources given to service and the spirit in which it occurred. In fact, a number of UWC teaching staff who had previously worked with the IB in other institutions commented that they found service was taken more seriously and given a far higher profile in UWCs.

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<sup>9</sup> UWC Review 1996/97: 16

Slepitz (1990) emphasises that the success of a community service programme is to a large extent dependent upon clear and regular acknowledgements of the value of community service, especially by an institution's administration. By various means, all UWCs attempted to convey the genuine community need for service and the importance of the responsibilities associated with it. But as the comment below suggests, while these messages were of significance to students, much of the value attributed to service activities was drawn intrinsically from the act of participating :

I wouldn't miss service, because I enjoy it and I know I have people relying on me. But if I was in any doubt about that, everyone makes it absolutely clear that service is sacred - no excuse for absence is acceptable. (PC04FC<sup>1</sup> journal extract)

Again personal example, particularly in the form of whole college involvement, conveyed the strongest value messages. In most colleges a large number of teaching staff - if not all or the majority - were involved in the service programme in line with the movement's stated expectation that teaching staff should set an example to students by participating in the college's non-academic activities. Implicit in this organisation were innumerable value messages as the following comment demonstrates:

I remember going along to my first few service sessions with quite a casual attitude, but I was struck by how seriously teachers and second years took it. They were never late and got straight down to it... it dawned on me pretty quickly that this wasn't some soft option, we had a job to do and people were depending on us. (PC11FG<sup>87</sup>)

However, value messages concerning service were not consistent across all UWCs. In one college there was no expectation of staff involvement in service activities and only a few staff were regularly involved. Given this, many students and staff tended to think of service as the CAS Coordinator's curriculum 'subject'. Requests were made for students to be excused from service in order to, for example, play sports or do extra academic work and the CAS Coordinator frequently 'traded' time by covering other staff members' classes or duties in order to obtain their assistance with CAS activities.

Although the majority of students questionnaired indicated that service signified '*a contribution to the community*' or '*helping the needy*', wherever qualitative data

indicated that value messages were consistently contradictory, questionnaire data revealed that proportionally larger numbers of students indicated that service meant ‘*doing the hours required*’, ‘*getting off campus*’, and ‘*a break from academics*’ (Q. Item M4).

However, despite some inconsistency, the microcosms of communal living that UWCs offered, especially with regard to service, clearly did much to promote responsibility for oneself and for others. The expectation that everyone ‘*chips in*’ was evident in daily activities and many student and graduate interviewees commented on how UWC life demonstrated to them the importance of their contribution to community living or the common good.

**Faith in education: *We believe in the UWC learning experience***

Fundamental beliefs about the role that education can play in improving the global state motivated the widespread enthusiasm and commitment found for the UWC learning experience in all of the movement’s colleges. Implicit to these beliefs was the assumption that one does not just become a good citizen, but, in fact, has to learn to be one:

This is no normal school, we’ve all signed up to something very different, something which we believe will produce the kind of people that will change the world. (AW02MT)

I heard about these places [UWCs] and I couldn’t wait to get here... I can learn chemistry, biology anywhere, we learn so much more here, about one another, about a better world. Imagine how different the world would be if everyone had this experience. (WK09MC<sup>2</sup>)

As established in Chapters Four and Five, UWCs offered similar curricula and shared an overall approach to teaching and learning. Evidence suggested that this consistency was based on several premises about education and, moreover, about the form of education that would achieve the movement’s goals in terms of citizenship learning:

- Education concerns the development of character as well as intellect
- Learning occurs through experience as well as academic study
- Effective learners are autonomous and critical thinkers
- Effective learners are active agents in their learning

College timetables reflected the value perceived in cognitive and affective learning and students took both aspects of their learning seriously. The Head at AD explained:

The colleges stress hard intellectual effort – the competitive nature of university entry worldwide leaves them little choice in the matter – but the lessons to be learned from shared experience, in the dormitories, on the playing fields, in cultural activities, but above all in the rendering of trained service to those in need, are the keynotes of UWC philosophy. (AD Head)

There was a clear and consistent code of conduct for learning, passed on mainly by example from one cohort of students to the next. No matter how alien to any particular learner, philosophical inquiry was central to teaching and learning in UWCs. In this tradition, the expectation was that students should inquire actively and independently into the nature of reality by acquiring information and questioning, analysing, assessing and integrating it, while teachers or more experienced students acted as facilitators to this process. This practice was believed to accommodate a plurality of cultural perspectives and to guard against values indoctrination. As discussion in Chapter Four established, there was concern that students should arrive at their value positions independently on the basis of reason and experience.

Personal experience was a key factor in many UWC learning contexts. For example, direct encounters with diversity in the context of communal life and hands-on experience of providing service for others were considered not only the most appropriate means of developing students' understanding of their roles as citizens, especially as citizens of a global community, but also the most effective. There was a shared belief that while various aspects of the formal curriculum could contribute towards citizenship learning, the lived experience had most overall impact. This view can be traced back to the thinking that influenced Hahn:

Men acquire virtues, not by knowing what they are nor by talking about them nor by admiring and praising them but by practising them.

(Aristotle quoted by Livingstone 1943: 150)

UWC settings and learning experiences were carefully structured to provide opportunities to explore citizenship at first hand in its local, national and global

dimensions, as well as to offer a demanding and fast-paced academic programme. There was an eagerness to make the most of these learning opportunities amongst students and teachers, which evidence has suggested was based on explicit understandings and commitments about the purpose of the UWC experience. Learning in this form was perceived to strike an essential balance between educating for the common good and for the self-interest of intellectual development:

Not only do they [UWC students] perform to the highest academic standards but they also have an understanding of the need for harmony and human dignity in world affairs and their own lives.

(Mark Hoffman, Chairman, International Board, UWC Review 1996/97)

### **UWCs' attempts to adopt a relativist stance on values education**

By exploring the cultural norms operating in UWCs and the meanings attributed to them, it was possible to identify a core of shared values on the basis of which college communities lived day by day. For example, displays of intolerance or discrimination were social taboos, instead there was a wealth of evidence to suggest more cosmopolitan values, such as equality, respect, tolerance, caring and trust, were promoted and oriented most behaviour.

Underpinning these values and norms, there appeared to be a small number of fundamental beliefs, which included:

- There is a common and interdependent humanity
- Citizenship has exclusive parameters
- Citizenship is duty-oriented and active, but also involves rights and democratic participation
- Citizens have multiple identities
- Peace, justice, understanding and cooperation will improve the global state
- Education provides the means to improve the global state

These values and beliefs can be traced back to the founding principles of the movement and have always determined the way in which UWCs operate. However on

the basis that any prescription for values education is likely to be contentious, UWC has always been careful to make clear that the process of ‘*encouraging*’ its students to ‘*become responsible citizens*’<sup>10</sup> is not one of imposing certain values or morality upon them. In fact, the perceived primacy of individual autonomy underpinned the view that students should determine their own set of values. Statements suggesting a morally neutral or relativist<sup>11</sup> stance were common in data collected from staff members:

...we make assumptions when we bring [students] together, but it is for them, not us, to determine these new values. (Sutcliffe 1985: 8)

We are very wary of students just jumping on the bandwagon. At this age they are very keen to have a cause. But they need to play an active role in deciding what this experience is all about... We’re not selling the Mission to them.

(AC02FT in response to the UWC Mission)

The research data suggested that, initially, new students and staff took on most of the established routines and customs of everyday life in their UWC relatively unquestioningly. There was a desire to ‘fit in’ and a great deal to take on board; much was accepted at this stage as ‘the way it works here’. Of course, this is not peculiar to UWCs; socialisation into any community usually occurs in this way because it facilitates a general need to ‘get on with life’ (Nias *et al.* 1989). However, there has been some argument amongst those studying socialisation about whether this ‘fitting in’ is an active or a passive process. For example, Nias *et al.* (1989: 10) argued that participating in these routines and customs is an active process ‘...*which does not deprive individuals of their capacity for independent action*’; rather by fitting in individuals develop a capacity to influence events. Others, such as Coulter and Taft (1973), have suggested that becoming ‘*acculturated*’ is a passive process of accommodation.

During this evaluation, it was evident that most new students and staff did fit in very quickly, but it was also apparent that the very process of fitting in required them to take an active role in shaping the day-to-day life of their college and learning. Staff encouraged students to be open-minded and critical and maintained mechanisms

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<sup>10</sup> Terminology used in the UWC Mission

<sup>11</sup> The term ‘*relativist*’ is used here to mean that one maintains that there are no universal standards of good and bad, right and wrong

whereby students could contribute to and question the ways in which their college community operated. To varying degrees a model of the school as a self-governing community – influenced formatively by the writings of the educationalist, Dewey – was in place in each UWC. For example, all colleges involved students and staff in the review and development of college rules or ‘*guidelines*’, new initiatives were usually negotiated at village meetings or in student-staff forums, staff often included students in decision-making concerning the content of the college programme, and students played a role in the selection of new staff in most UWCs.

This form of participatory democracy bears a strong resemblance to an initiative established by Kohlberg in a large, urban American school the 1970s, which was designed to develop the moral maturity of its students by providing them with the opportunity to share responsibility for all aspects of the school’s communal life. At the time, Scharf (1977: 91) commented that ‘*such efforts to genuinely involve adolescents in the political processes of the school have been rare*’; more than twenty years later, there are still very few examples of this degree of student involvement cited in research on citizenship. In this sense, therefore, it is interesting to note what UWCs achieved in terms of developing students’ awareness of their roles as citizens, and especially the related skills of independent and critical thought, via genuine and extensive involvement in running their college community. However, data arising from this research also indicated that efforts to project a relativist stance on values education delimited these achievements in certain key respects.

### ***The difficulties of ‘ready-made’ value commitments***

The UWC movement has always been more comfortable associating its educational enterprise with ‘*fostering inherent qualities*’ in its students, ‘*qualities which have qualified them for their scholarships in the first place*’ (Sutcliffe 1987c: 13), than it has with values education. To this end, a ‘*commitment*’ to the movement’s aims was one of UWC’s official selection criteria for students. As Chapter Three established, divergence from this criterion, as well as from unofficial notions of an ideal candidate, had caused considerable tension within the movement.

There was no evidence to suggest that adherence to UWC selection criteria produced ready-made college communities with shared value systems. But in SEA and WK,

where student populations were selected predominantly by means which placed little or no emphasis on the character and values of candidates, it was evident that staff and students were endeavouring to establish understandings and commitments amongst a diversity of values, interests and behaviour more representative of that found in contemporary, pluralistic societies. Students in these two colleges commonly talked of ‘*rallying support*’, ‘*challenging apathy*’, facing opposition and negotiating ideas and initiatives. By contrast, students in other colleges often referred to the ‘*enthusiasm*’, ‘*idealism*’, ‘*support*’ and ‘*open-mindedness*’ they found in their UWCs. In fact, new students and staff in these colleges often noted the considerable differences between their UWC community and their previous school and friends/colleagues. One student wrote in her research journal:

It’s so easy to get things off the ground here. You come up with an idea for something and everyone is right there behind you offering help and encouragement. It’s a bit unreal. But I guess that’s why we’re here... we’re different from most people out there. (AD12FC<sup>1</sup>)

As the data presented in Chapters Five and Six demonstrated, staff and graduates, in particular, were concerned that a spirit of realism was lacking in colleges. Like Heater (1990: 339), they felt that it was necessary ‘*to keep in balance the precepts of the ideal and the demands of society*’ if students were to recognise and be equipped for the opportunities and difficulties of achieving the movement’s goals in post-college life. Efforts to avoid values indoctrination by admitting only students with a prior commitment to UWC’s aims appeared to limit important citizenship learning experiences in this respect in some colleges.

### ***The difficulties in tackling value dilemmas with relativism***

However, despite the stated differences in the character of college communities, value dilemmas, even conflict and controversy, naturally arose in all UWCs, and it was under these circumstances that the problems of relativism were most obvious. Faced with dilemmas or debate concerning value positions, most teaching staff across the movement generally took the same approach. Adopting an essentially western and liberal tradition (Bottery 2000), they attempted to steer a neutral line through the debate, harvesting -and seemingly, tolerating – all viewpoints, so that students could reason between opinions and reach their own preferred value position.



An observed PSE session at one college exemplified this approach and the difficulties inherent in it. When the subject of a perceived sexist incident in college was raised by one of the students, the teacher present immediately took the discussion to the more abstract level of sexism in society generally. From that point she facilitated a debate about sexism in which students were invited to state their opinions. Some of these opinions were based on inaccurate assumptions and certain perspectives were overlooked. The teacher did not offer an opinion of her own or pass comment on the opinions of students. Following this session, some students complained that the college was not taking a position against sexism. They expressed frustration in response to issues being left unresolved or '*brushed under the carpet*' and drew conclusions about the teacher's view on this matter based on her facial expressions and the students she encouraged to offer their opinion.

Generally students complained that debates in college, especially those conducted in Theory of Knowledge lessons, often left more questions than answers and that the college community was so concerned with being inclusive of, and inoffensive to, all cultural perspectives that discussions could only operate at a level of extreme generality.

### ***The difficulties of an ambiguous vision of the future***

A further frustration that can be related to the movement's concern to maintain an position of apparent neutrality in relation to values education was voiced mainly by graduates. As evidence presented in Chapter Six has established, graduates generally left UWCs keen to act on their experience, but with few ideas about how they might do this. Bunzel (1985: 142) suggests that this is an inevitable outcome when students are '*...expected to be the midwives of this new world, but without the benefit of any guiding ethic. Do it, but don't expect us to talk about it, the adults seem to say.*'

A reluctance to commit to any more than a vague ideal of a more just, peaceful and cooperative world and to specify expectations of its graduates has been evident in the movement's philosophy since its first college was founded. In fact, it has always been considered preferable to leave the experience with '*unwrapped ends*' and graduates

with ‘*questions burning in their minds*’<sup>12</sup>. Consequently, many graduates described a period in which they reluctantly put most of their idealism ‘*on hold*’ in order to ‘*make sense*’ of their UWC experience in terms of its implications for their post-college life. They often reflected that they could have been better prepared to build upon their UWC experience by being given opportunities as students to envisage what their experience might mean for their personal reality in life after UWC.

### **The need to abandon a relativist stance on values education**

There has been much debate about the role of teachers in values education. At one extreme there is the view that teachers should take on the role of moral guides, transmitting values on behalf of wider society, and at the other, that they should simply assist students to make their own value choices in a morally neutral manner (Haydon 1997).

The concept of neutrality or relativism has arisen from the search for means to guard against indoctrination. Concern about the possible influence of a teacher with strong value commitments is legitimate and as Watson and Ashton (1995: 71) point out, there are circumstances in which it is helpful for a teacher to withhold their own value position:

If, for example, a class betrays a ‘follow-the-teacher’ mentality, or dislikes the trouble of thinking for themselves, then reserve on the part of the teacher may be called for.

However, the data presented in this chapter supports the arguments against teacher neutrality:

- There is no guarantee that harvesting opinions from students will offer an adequate range for individuals to reason between. In fact, ignorance and inexperience may characterise the debate.
- Tolerance may be perceived as an absolute i.e. ‘anything goes’
- It is very difficult, perhaps impossible, for teachers to be neutral. Facial expressions, the handling of debate, the selection of material for a lesson and

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<sup>12</sup> Chairman of UWC’s International Board

the manner in which material is presented all might be perceived as reflecting a viewpoint.

- The teacher's viewpoint is perceived as beyond question as it is not laid open to discussion.
- Conclusions may not be reached without open and considered participation in the debate on the part of the teacher.

Burkimsher (2000) suggests that confronting value dilemmas and issues of a controversial nature is inherent in citizenship education. On this basis, Pearce and Hallgarten (2000: 14), amongst others, propose a non-avoidance approach, stating that the teaching of citizenship involves making '*painful choices*' and cannot be '*decanted into neutralised arenas*'. And in this respect, there were examples within the evaluation's data of instances where college relations, and consequently citizenship education, benefited from encounters that faced controversy head-on. Perhaps the most memorable of these occurred in AC during the period of data collection at the college. In response to the discovery that two students had been using illegal drugs, the head of the college called an emergency meeting of all staff and students. He spoke for approximately two or three minutes only, in which time he simply expressed his own, clearly heartfelt, emotions and then left the room. This act opened the way for several days of no-holds-barred and often heated communication between staff and students on the subject of drugs and related communal issues, such as trust and responsibility. This process resulted in renewed commitments to absolutes that were considered beyond negotiation, as well as new understandings; ground was also established on which it was felt there was scope to differ.

Rogers (1998: 214) proposes that to '*arrive at a place of caring about humanity, the planet and future generations*' there is a need to '*open ourselves to and effectively cope with the myriad of emotions that crash into consciousness as we face issues of today*'. As the example presented above suggests, this approach will often result in temporary disharmony, but as Grefath<sup>13</sup> points out '*a culture without thorns settles over risk society like a foam carpet*'.

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<sup>13</sup> Quoted in Pearce and Hallgarten (2000: 14) without details of the original source

Rogers (*op.cit.*) also emphasises that the journey towards caring and responsibility must include exploring and initiating ‘*personal paths of action*’, which can only be envisaged if ‘*images of desired futures*’ are considered. In this respect, this thesis has already established that UWCs did not provide enough structured opportunities for students to reflect on their college experiences and to give them meaning within the bigger picture and their own futures. It was apparent that the movement was very successful in achieving a shared sense of responsibility for its goals, but deliberately cut the experience short of establishing specific routes to those goals. The outcome appeared to be that most graduates left their UWCs with a strong sense of responsibility to the common good, but with few ideas of how they might translate this into action in the world outside UWC.

### **Concluding comments**

Discussion in this chapter has suggested that to understand the potency of informal learning experiences in UWCs, it was necessary to uncover the meanings that students and staff gave to them. The process of analysing research participants’ explanations of their interactions with day-to-day activities and with one another established that they were governed by certain norms, which acted as mainly unspoken rules for behaviour. These norms were found to be based on shared commitments and understandings relating to value positions and beliefs, which could be traced back to the movement’s founding principles. It was apparent that these values and beliefs were the ‘*deeper set of phenomena*’ described by Schein (1991: 244) that tied together individual activities and interactions and gave them meaning as part of the UWC experience as a whole.

In this chapter, these shared behaviours, values and beliefs have been referred to as the UWC culture and have been found to be the factors of most influence in terms of the movement’s effectiveness in meeting its aims. Certain understandings and commitments were crucial to the consistency and regularity of students’ encounters with notions and examples of good citizenship, but equally the process of developing these understanding and commitments was fundamental to students’ exploration of their rights, duties, loyalties and responsibilities as citizens.

It became apparent that a fear of imposing values on students, resulted in efforts on the part of staff and within the movement's rhetoric to appear morally neutral. This stance not only belied the significance of what the colleges were achieving, but effectively delimited the power of their culture, and consequently, the impact of the learning experience they offered.

As Hill suggests (2001) the task of charting a course between neutrality and indoctrination is a difficult one. But it became apparent that UWCs achieved most, and could achieve more, by being open about their value orientation; by engaging in all-inclusive, no-holds-barred debate about issues of importance to local, national and global citizenship and about visions of desired futures; by supporting their students to develop the skills of values analysis and critical thinking in order that they might participate fully and independently in debate; by taking debate to a conclusion either in the form of a commitment to an answer which the college community believed to be 'right' or by finding tolerable scope to differ; and by supporting students to envisage paths of action in post-college life. Just as it was apparent that UWC's culture defined the movement's effectiveness in meeting its aims, it was also apparent that clarity, integrity and consistency in its colleges' everyday activities determined the power and influence of the movement's culture.

## Chapter Eight

### The Conclusions and Implications of the Evaluation

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This research constituted the first full-scale evaluation of the UWC movement and its colleges. As a result, the study was necessarily exploratory in nature and produced a wealth of data relating to the full spectrum of activity within the movement. The findings relating to this data have been presented in detail within the body of this thesis. In this final chapter, the main findings of the evaluation are considered in the light of what the study set out to achieve and in terms of their implications for the study of education and its practice. This discussion occurs under the following headings:

- The main findings in relation to the purpose of the evaluation
- The implications of the findings for practice in UWCs
- The contribution of the findings to the broader context of education
- The implications of the findings for further research
- Concluding comments

#### **The main findings in relation to the purpose of the evaluation**

This evaluation was commissioned on the basis that ‘*hard evidence of what UWC is achieving*’<sup>1</sup> was required. In the process of establishing its full remit, UWC personnel and college heads were persuaded concerning the utility of examining not only *what* UWCs were achieving, but *how* they were doing so. The intention was to identify UWC’s achievements, but also to gain the insights which would inform and improve practice. This evaluation was designed to collect data concerning how learning occurred in UWCs and what impacts this learning had on the students and graduates of the UWC movement.

Given the purpose of the evaluation, the following findings carry particular significance:

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<sup>1</sup> Recorded discussion with the Former Director General of UWC, March 1995

***UWC is successful in meeting its aims***

The effectiveness of UWCs in pursuing the movement's aim to encourage students to reach '*their highest intellectual potential*'<sup>2</sup> was apparent in the impressive results of its students in IB examinations. However, based on the founding belief that education has an important role to play in developing a more peaceful, just, understanding and cooperative world, UWC has always placed values education at the heart of its mission and educational practices. Therefore, the full significance of the movement's achievements was only evident by considering both the cognitive and affective domains of learning.

***An education in citizenship***

A shared faith in the capacity of the individual to '*make a difference in the world*' and a shared belief in the role that educational institutions can play in preparing young people for that task transpired in the many varied forms learning experiences took in each of the UWCs globally. Students across the movement were engaged in both theoretical and experiential learning about the rights, duties, loyalties and responsibilities of citizenship in an interdependent world. To this end, learning in each UWC successfully fostered:

- **knowledge** and **understanding** of the students' own and others' origins, their world circumstances and their interrelations
- the **values** of respect and caring for others and the environment, of tolerance for diversity, and of concern for just and peaceful relations
- a wide range of **skills** for cooperative and responsible participation in the college community and other local, national and global contexts
- the **confidence** to question traditions, conventions and knowledge

***The lasting impacts of UWC learning experiences***

The enormous personal and financial investment already made in the UWC venture, as well as that needed for its future survival and development, had driven the quest to establish what this venture was achieving. Although expectations of the movement's graduates had shifted away from the visions of world leaders ambitiously forecast in the early years of UWC, it seemed that existing esoteric notions of the UWC Mission and the lofty aspirations that

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<sup>2</sup> UWC Guidelines (1983: 3)

constitute UWC's slogans and mottoes had misdirected the movement's consideration of its achievements.

UWC's aims were found to be deliberately profound and broadly interpretable and, it would seem, consequently, the real world impacts of UWC learning experiences were found to be diverse, dynamic and often subtle. Given this, surveys of post-UWC careers and voluntary service activities had provided a very limited perspective on the many varied ways in which the movement's graduates were applying their UWC learning in post-college life.

All graduates involved in this evaluation reported that their UWC education had a formative and enduring impact on their lives. Graduate interviewees stated an absolute commitment to the movement's ideals and there was a great deal of consistency in the ways that they described the influence of the UWC experience on their knowledge, skills and dispositions. However the ways in which this influence transpired in their life styles and life choices varied significantly not only between individuals, but over time. It was clear that although interviewees were able to provide numerous examples of their active commitment to the movement's ideals, the form this commitment took was determined by personal circumstance, life experience, human potential and priorities.

This evaluation established that the true significance of the movement's achievements was apparent in their graduates' enduring commitment and capacity to play active and responsible roles as citizens of local, national and global communities. As one graduate commented:

Once your mind has been stretched, once you've had a taste of how things could be, there's no going back, whatever life throws at you. (SEA07MG<sup>79</sup>)

### ***The potency of informal learning experiences***

Throughout its history, UWC has sought means to promote citizenship learning. Its involvement in developing and pioneering the IB was an important initiative in this respect and this evaluation established that the curriculum's rationale, structure and content remained consistent with the movement's aims, especially in the sense that the



combination of theoretical and experiential learning was designed to develop ‘*the power to think*’ and ‘*the will to act*’<sup>3</sup>.

The IB’s academic courses, as well as additional academic courses organised by the colleges themselves, were found to play an important role in citizenship learning by providing information about social, political, economic and environmental concepts and processes, prevailing world conditions and customs, and global dynamics. In part, the subject matter of these courses determined their contribution and some were better disposed than others to offer the knowledge base required for citizenship.

But while theoretical learning was found to be essential for informed citizenship, the evaluation produced a wealth of findings to suggest that students learnt about their rights, duties, loyalties and responsibilities as citizens most effectively by exercising them practically. In this respect, the true potency of a UWC education was identified by considering how the colleges functioned as communities and the informal learning experiences found therein. The following informal learning experiences were found to be most supportive of the movement’s aims and, inherently, citizenship education:

- Interactive and collaborative approaches to teaching and learning
- All-inclusive and genuine involvement and influence in college and local community life, particularly in the form of collaborative decision-making, problem-solving, leadership and endeavour
- Public interaction and debate which encourages critical and reflective thought upon theoretical and experiential learning, their relevance to one another, and the complexities and controversies inherent in them

These experiences were concerned with the way in which college members related to and valued each other and, despite the fact that UWCs were not carbon copies of one another, there was a consistency within and between colleges in this respect. Analysis of the meanings attributed to college experiences revealed that this consistency was oriented by understandings and commitments relating to a core of shared values and beliefs, which could be traced back to the movement’s founding principles. For

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<sup>3</sup> Phraseology commonly used by Hahn (see Chapter Two) and in line with the official rhetoric of both the IBO and UWC

example, the shared belief that citizenship is active and duty-oriented resulted in service activities being attributed prominence and genuine significance in college curricula<sup>4</sup>. The act of taking part in service, especially given the status it was awarded, was found to be fundamental to students learning about responsible and active citizenship.

In this way, the beliefs and values shared by the colleges and the behaviour motivated by them defined the movement's effectiveness. This thesis has referred to these shared beliefs, values and behaviours as the UWC culture.

### ***UWCs have the potential to achieve more***

While the UWC movement was found to be effective in meeting its aims, there were some key factors that militated against its effectiveness and inhibited its potential to achieve more.

***A lack of realism*** The majority of student questionnaire respondents found college life to be '*out of touch with the real world*' and many interviewees expressed concern about the imbalance between idealism and realism in their colleges. The problems that graduating students encountered in the first year of post-college life offered perhaps the most graphic illustration of the implications of this imbalance. It appeared that the movement may be more effective in meeting its aims if its colleges provided students with more realistic contexts in which to explore the opportunities and difficulties of achieving its goals. The following three factors appeared to have most impact in this respect.

#### **i) Student selection**

Where college student populations were selected on the basis of official and/or unofficial specifications for the ideal candidate, research participants spoke of how they were struck by the high degree of enthusiasm, idealism, support and open-mindedness they encountered when they joined their college community and commented on how much this spirit differed from, for example, the spirit of their previous school. By contrast, where college student populations were selected

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<sup>4</sup> Chapter Seven considered how value messages concerning service in one UWC were not consistent with those in other colleges

predominantly by means that placed little or no emphasis on the character and values of the candidate, descriptions of college life appeared to indicate that the same spirit developed over time as the college community established understandings and commitments about what was important.

While the merits of offering students models of good citizenship and community were apparent, it was also clear that i) greater diversity in the character and values of students did not prohibit the development of models of good citizenship and community, and that ii) this diversity was crucial if students were to learn how to tackle the challenges of citizenship in contemporary, pluralistic society.

#### ii) Being withdrawn from the real world

The research data suggested that Hahn's concern to '*protect*' students from the '*corrupting*'<sup>5</sup> influences of the real world was misplaced. Many teachers and graduates felt service activities provided an important dose of realism as it required students to overcome real world obstacles through contact with off-campus communities. However there were strong indications, especially in the more remotely located colleges, that service and other initiatives such as Host Families and Project Week provided insufficient contact with off-campus communities.

#### iii) Avoiding conflict and controversy

Concern to be inclusive and inoffensive to all cultural perspectives meant that conflict and controversy in college communities was often either side-stepped or dealt with in a very general and abstract manner. Under these circumstances, communal harmony was maintained artificially and frustration was apparent. Research data indicated that a non-avoidance approach provided a more realistic learning experience for students as it supported them to confront the value dilemmas and controversial issues inherent in citizenship. It became clear that temporary disharmony was a productive and necessary feature of citizenship education.

#### ***Inadequate reflection on experiential learning***

The evaluation established that structured opportunities to reflect on UWC learning experiences were limited. While the approach to the teaching and learning of academic subjects and, more specifically,

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<sup>5</sup> Skidelsky (1969: 185)

the subject ToK provided students with forums to reflect critically on theoretical learning, the classroom did not offer a regular venue to make sense of experiential learning. One consequence of this situation was that students rarely questioned the social, political, economic or environmental circumstances that gave rise to the need for their service and, as a result, many perceived active citizenship as a charitable response to the way the world is. Another consequence was that most graduates encountered some difficulties envisaging how they might use their UWC learning experiences in the personal reality of their post-college life.

### **The implications of the findings for practice in UWCs**

Numerous implications for practice in UWCs might be drawn from the findings presented in this thesis, especially given specific circumstances in different colleges. The following implications relate to the main findings of the study and the UWC movement overall.

#### ***The need to strike a balance between idealism and realism***

The fact that many graduates referred to the first year of post-college life as a time to ‘*get real*’ or ‘*rebalance*’ suggests a spirit of realism needs to underpin the learning experiences that UWCs offer their students. In this respect, it would appear that the movement needs to re-evaluate its criteria and procedures for student selection to ensure that its educational opportunity is open to ‘*the widest possible range of social and cultural backgrounds*’ as its philosophy statement proposes (Appendix I). This re-evaluation may include:

- challenging notions of the ideal student and esoteric perceptions of the movement’s mission;
- ensuring wide spread advertisement of college places and scholarships;
- admitting more students to study for IB certificates<sup>6</sup>;
- considering the viability of developing short pre-IB programmes for students who have not had the educational opportunities to reach the academic standard required for the IB<sup>7</sup>;

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<sup>6</sup> Qualifications that do not require as high academic standards as the full diploma

<sup>7</sup> WK has run courses of this kind successfully for students from Angola and Mozambique

- developing measures that encourage and support applications from those with little or no English;
- developing advice for selection committees concerning legitimate and effective means to determine academic potential.

The evaluation identified two further ways in which a spirit of realism may be promoted in UWCs:

- i) by providing more regular and varied contact with off-campus communities, which presents students with opportunities to explore their roles as citizens in more realistic contexts than college communities can provide;
- ii) by adopting a non-avoidance approach to controversy and conflict, which acknowledges that citizenship involves making painful choices and temporary disharmony.

There was evidence that a non-avoidance approach to controversy and conflict, and a spirit of realism, were achieved most successfully when teachers did not attempt to adopt a neutral line, but instead stated their own viewpoint on the basis that students were encouraged and supported to reflect critically on all viewpoints presented. The data also suggested that it was important for college communities to reach conclusions under these circumstances. These conclusions may take the form of renewed commitments to absolute values that are considered beyond negotiation, new understandings, and/or ground on which it is felt there is scope to differ.

### ***The need for structured and guided reflection***

It was apparent that students' learning, especially in relation to citizenship, would benefit from more structured and guided opportunities to make connections between theoretical and experiential learning and to envisage personal paths of action, especially for post-college life. If students are to recognise the opportunities for and implications of action, this process needs to be informed by an adequate base of theoretical knowledge concerning political, social and environmental concepts and processes.

The merits of encouraging students to think critically about knowledge were evident in academic learning, but it was apparent that encouragement to reflect critically on social, political, economic or environmental circumstances was also crucial if students were not to take an accepting attitude towards the status quo. In the aforementioned spirit of realism, these opportunities need to acknowledge controversy and conflict and should facilitate the development of problem-solving initiatives, as well as boundaries for acceptable diversity of opinions and behaviour. Programmes such as Conflict Resolution and ToK, as well as the evaluation process for CAS, appeared to have an important role to play in this respect, but the findings of this evaluation suggest that it is unlikely that they can take full responsibility for this task.

### ***The need to know and understand the movement's culture***

This research established that UWC's culture defined its effectiveness. Therefore, this thesis proposes that in order to maintain and heighten its effectiveness, the movement needs to know and understand its culture. In the sense that UWC's ideology has always been very explicit, the movement has already taken steps to achieve this goal and it seemed that this explicitness contributed in no small part to the power of the UWC culture. However, this thesis has offered important insights into how core beliefs work their way to the surface of day-to-day life in the colleges both to the advantage and the detriment of the movement's aims. Consideration of this process seems essential, therefore, if the success of current practice is to be maintained and if decision-making concerning new initiatives and changes for improvement is to be effective<sup>8</sup>. Changes, for example, intended to increase the spirit of realism in colleges will only be fully effective and consistent with other aspects of the college experience if elitist beliefs concerning citizenship are addressed.

### ***The need to recognise the movement's achievements***

Stoll and Fink (1996) found that effective schools celebrated their achievements. In this respect, the culture of UWC appeared to be '*struggling*'<sup>9</sup>. It became clear that the movement needed to redirect attention from the overwhelming claims of its promotional material to the highly creditable achievements of all of its colleges in terms of citizenship education. Like any human enterprise, there was room for improvement. But it appeared crucial for the movement's morale, its development and

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<sup>8</sup> Knowledge and understanding of the sub-cultures operating in each college would also be beneficial

<sup>9</sup> Stoll and Fink (1996: 85)

its contribution to the world of education that its endeavours and achievements in citizenship learning and the many real world manifestations of these were recognised and shared.

### **The contribution of the study to the broader context of education**

Heater (1990) suggested that UWCs should be considered as models of what can be achieved in preparing young world citizens. However, the potential to generalise from learning in eight UWCs to learning in other educational institutions needs to be treated with some caution. For example, the generalisability of this evaluation's findings might be disputed on the grounds that UWC learning contexts are not representative of the contexts in which most 16-18 year olds learn, nor easy to replicate. However, the fact that many of the evaluation's findings are supported by the literature in relevant fields suggests that they may transcend learning contexts in some respects. Where this resonance has been found, it is suggested that these findings are likely to be more broadly generalisable and corroborate thinking in certain fields of study.

In some instances, this evaluation produced findings in relation to which there was little or no discussion in the literature. Where this situation was so, it is proposed that this study may offer new insights that would merit further investigation in other educational contexts. In one case, the findings of this evaluation disputed the findings of another piece of research conducted in UWCs. In this situation, the validity and potential generalisability of the findings were considered by exploring the grounds for this discrepancy.

The following discussion outlines the main contributions that this evaluation might make to the study of education and its practice.

### ***Citizenship education***

In England, citizenship education has, in the past, always tended to constitute the ideologically less contentious concept of local citizenship (Fogelman 1991). Education for national and global citizenship has been inhibited by concerns about its overt politics, particularly in the multicultural classroom, and by a lack of relevant training and guidance for teachers (Lynch 1992). Although these sources of inhibition remain

(Annette 2000), new guidelines and programmes of study for citizenship education stipulate learning related to both national and global citizenship (QCA 2000). In this context, and at a time when citizenship is high on educational agendas globally (NFER 1996<sup>10</sup>), the data arising from this evaluation responds to an urgent need to establish what constitutes effective practice in this area of learning (Kerr 2000).

### ***Evolving concepts of citizenship***

Although this evaluation did not provide the scope to investigate concepts of citizenship in UWCs fully, it did offer some useful insights concerning the thinking that underpinned effective citizenship learning. There is much debate in the literature about contemporary concepts of citizenship (e.g. Heater 1990 and 1999, Massey 1994, Miller 2000, Tate 2000). Tension between liberalist and communitarian notions and concerns about the idea of multiple citizenship are prominent. In fact, Annette (2000) comments that the difficulties of defining citizenship contribute to the limited development of citizenship education.

UWC's concept of citizenship has evolved beyond ideas of civic duty and forging better relations between nation states promoted by its founders to constitute the notion of a responsible, 'world-minded' and informed participant in local, national and global society. Recognition that circumstances which affect our immediate well-being are located in a trans-national arena was reflected in the way that students were encouraged to '*Think global, act local*'; the acceptance that, however complex, citizenship now operates on various levels was evident in opportunities provided for students to explore their commonalities and differences and their loyalties and responsibilities to the local, national and global communities; the acknowledgement that what a citizen needs to know about has changed over time was reflected in the development of college curricula to include subjects such as Environmental Systems, World Religions, and Science, Technology and Social Change; and the belief that citizenship is not only about social responsibility or duty, but is also about rights and democratic participation was evident in the genuine and extensive involvement of students in decision-making concerning college matters.

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<sup>10</sup> In 1996 the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority in England commissioned an International Review of Curriculum and Assessment Frameworks. The review was conducted by the National Foundation for Educational Research in sixteen countries globally (Australia, Canada, England, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Korea, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the USA)



This concept of citizenship was in line with a model that Miller (2000: 28) refers to as a '*minority view among the general public*' in Britain. This view is that the citizen is not just a law abiding rights-holder and claimant, but someone who is actively involved in shaping the way his or her community develops. While this may not be a widely held conception of citizenship, it is the one proposed in England's statutory orders for citizenship education (QCA 2000). Therefore the findings concerning effective citizenship education in UWCs are particularly relevant to current practice in this country.

However one should not overlook the fact that UWC's concept of citizenship still included exclusive parameters as did the concept advocated by its founders. The UWC enterprise has, since its conception, been based on the premise that young people who were, for example, confident, intelligent, assertive and vocal should be nurtured for leadership roles as members of an elite group of citizens destined to change the world. The findings of this evaluation have illustrated that this dimension of UWC's concept of citizenship was problematic, especially in the fact that it inhibited effective citizenship learning.

***Including citizenship in a disciplinary curriculum framework*** It has been suggested that if education is to move beyond sound bites about citizenship and community to a point where it enables students to acquire the knowledge, skills and capabilities for citizenship, attention needs to focus on the content and organisation of the curriculum (Annette 2000). UWCs were effective models of practice in this respect. For example, the IB required that students continued to study a balance of subjects across the arts and sciences; the subject matter of courses was internationally oriented, including the study of a student's first language and world literature; additional courses were provided by colleges to increase awareness of global issues (e.g. Environmental Systems); all students studied ToK to facilitate critical reflection on their academic learning; and service learning was given a high profile on college timetables.

Although, for most UWCs, accommodating such a varied curriculum was made easier by the fact that they were fully residential and able to offer some non-academic activities in the evenings, it should be noted that part of every conventional school day

in each UWC was dedicated to Creativity, Action and Service activities (CAS) and that private study supplemented academic learning in the classroom.

However, this evaluation established that the content and organisation of the curriculum in UWCs was not as significant for effective citizenship education as the way in which the learning community operated. It became clear that it was not so much what was done in the colleges, but how it was done; citizenship learning was rooted in the way college members related to activities and one another, and therefore, the spirit and way of life of the whole college. In this respect, the findings of this study support and contribute to a body of theory and research which has grown during the lifetime of this evaluation (e.g. Potter 2002, Hayden and Wong 1997, Hayden and Thompson 1995c, Morrison 1994, Edwards and Fogelman 1993, Heater 1990).

Evidence arising from this evaluation suggests that effective citizenship education requires an approach to teaching and learning which fosters values, skills and confidence for responsible and active citizenship. However, it also indicates that the effectiveness of this approach lies mainly in the degree to which it crosses academic disciplines and is consistent with the broader norms and expectations of school or college life. For example, UWCs demonstrated that if caring and respect are to be promoted effectively, then these values must permeate all interactions between college members, including the way in which teachers interact with one another, and extend to the broader community and the environment. This consistency gives genuine meaning and, consequently, potency to citizenship learning. These findings also offer empirical support for Duffy's view<sup>11</sup> that citizenship was taught best by personal example.

### ***The role of service learning in citizenship education***

While the importance of experiential learning for citizenship education has been established, this evaluation also contributes to the growing recognition being accorded to the influence of service learning in this respect (e.g. Potter 2002, Annette 2000, Silcox 1993, Delve et al. 1990). Research data established that service activities fostered understanding of, as well as a sense of compassion and responsibility for, the needs of the people and the environments that UWC students served. In this way service learning was found to be very effective in the promotion of responsible and active citizenship.

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<sup>11</sup> Michael Duffy made this point to the inaugural conference of the Centre of Citizenship Studies in Education and is quoted by Burkinsher in Edwards and Fogelman (1993: 15)

However, the spirit in which service occurred appeared to have a significant impact on its effectiveness in this realm of learning as well. The majority of UWC students and graduates involved in this evaluation listed service learning amongst the most influential factors in their UWC experience and attributed its impact to the importance and value service was awarded by their college and local communities. But it should be noted that these findings directly contradicted the conclusions of research conducted by Richards (1992) on service learning in UWCs.

Richards concluded that UWC students were '*ambivalent*' about service and that some even '*resented*' the time given to it. In contrast, this evaluation established that while students encountered numerous dilemmas about how to distribute their time within the dense and demanding schedule of college life, only a small minority resented or were ambivalent towards their service commitments and many willingly prioritised them beyond official requirements. Whilst an explanation for the discrepancy between these research findings has been hard to find, the grounds for Richards' conclusions are not wholly convincing. In places, his discussion of data appeared to contradict his conclusions. For example, he commented that '*...service is indeed a valued and authentic part of the school program*' (p.38) and that '*...there was continually an atmosphere of wanting to serve*' (p.40); he also made references to '*pockets of apathy*' rather than a more widespread attitude.

In relation to the spirit of service learning, this evaluation also produced findings upon which there appeared to be little discussion in the literature. While it has been stressed that citizenship should not be about charity, but about equal rights and moral duty (Heater 1990), discussion about how to achieve this kind of understanding and participation has tended to focus on the importance of students reflecting critically on their service experiences (e.g. Delve *et al.* 1990, Kennedy 1997, Potter 2002). Although data gathered in UWCs suggested that reflection in service learning was indeed essential, it also revealed that a charitable attitude could be avoided if students were encouraged to participate broadly in the local community and if the local community was invited to participate in the life of the college. Under these circumstances, students tended to perceive service in terms of their contribution to the community and reciprocal relationships. These findings may even suggest that the term 'service' is no longer a useful one given contemporary concepts of citizenship.

***Investigating the long term impacts of citizenship education*** Waterson and Hayden (1999: 23) comment that there is ‘*a dearth of systematically gathered data*’ concerning the impacts of international education. The review of the limited research in this field provided in Chapter Six establishes that while some researchers<sup>12</sup> are beginning to consider the impacts on students still studying in international schools, investigation of the long term impacts has tended to focus on readily measurable trends in the educational and vocational pursuits of graduates. This evaluation provides, therefore, important evidence concerning not only the long term impacts of international education, but also effective means to investigate the affective impacts of learning.

The degree to which adults are the products of their school education is clearly difficult to determine by objective measures, therefore the perceptions of UWC graduates on this subject were considered the only valid data. Naturally, most graduates found it difficult to distinguish between the influence of their UWC experience and other experiences in life; however, they were very clear about where their UWC education had been one of the factors of influence upon their lives.

The only research tool used to gather graduates’ perceptions was interview as it became clear that the nature of the data arising from graduates’ interviews was not suited to the ‘ticks in boxes’ format of a postal questionnaire. The use of open-ended questions in these interviews was productive as it allowed the full diversity of experience to emerge. Also, the practice of conducting most interviews over two meetings prompted interviewees to reflect and articulate further, which provided far richer data than one meeting was able to.

As concluded earlier in this chapter, the real world manifestations of UWC learning as perceived by graduate interviewees were highly varied, dynamic and often subtle. Therefore it was not considered useful to catalogue a multiplicity of evidence provided by just sixty of the movement’s graduates at a particular moment in time. Instead the nature of these impacts and the manner in which UWC graduates were striving to ‘*make a difference in the world*’ were considered. This approach established that UWC graduates had a disposition for idealism, were acting on UWC ideals and had maintained a lasting commitment to these ideals, but, above all, it established that the

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<sup>12</sup> e.g. Hayden and Thompson (1995c, 1997a) and Waterson and Hayden (1999)

ways in which graduates described the influence of their UWC learning consistently related to the movement's concept of responsible and active citizenship.

### ***International education***

It is unfortunate that the term 'international education' has been employed in such an eclectic manner worldwide as it does little semantically to define UWCs or the education they provide. Rather it associates UWCs with a wide variety of education and institutions including schools that offer a national education abroad, schools with an internationally diverse student intake, an increasing range of international curricula and, most recently, 'internationalised' national curricula.

It appears the term's broad usage derives from the fact that it is commonly assumed to be synonymous with international schools. The implication has been that by definition international education is offered in international schools. As discussed in Chapter Two, some distinctions between forms of international education had been made when this evaluation began and UWCs were being associated with a relatively small group of schools providing an '*ideology-driven*' international education related to the goals of educating for global citizenship (Matthews 1988: 24).

During the lifetime of this thesis, discussion in this field has progressed to debating what the ideology of '*internationally-minded*' schools should be (Hill 2000, Gellar 2002). However this debate seems somewhat premature given that very little has been established about the existing ideology of such schools and how it impacts upon the educational experiences they provide.

In this context, this evaluation makes an important contribution to the field by providing empirical evidence of this process. The findings presented in this thesis have illustrated that it was, in fact, the culture of UWCs that defined the form of international education they offer. This culture included the behaviour, values and beliefs relating to all aspects of college life. However a full understanding of the education provided in UWCs was only established when a core of shared beliefs functioning at the deepest level of this culture was identified. These beliefs tied together and gave meaning and potency to UWC learning experiences.

### ***Studying the culture of effective schools***

This evaluation produced findings that demonstrated the substantial influence of an educational institution's culture upon learning. While this influence has been recognised for some time<sup>13</sup>, this evaluation is part of only a small body of research which has explored this relationship (e.g. Nias *et al.* 1989, Torrington and Weightman 1993, Stoll and Fink 1996). This paucity is due in no small part to the difficulties posed for empirical study by the complexity and elusiveness of institutional culture. However, given the established significance of school culture (especially in relation to citizenship learning), it seems essential that the influence of this phenomenon is explored fully despite the difficulties.

The results of an unarguably messy and frustrating process of data gathering and analysis on this subject provide important insights concerning the effectiveness of UWCs; however, they also contribute to debate in the research community concerning effective and appropriate means of studying culture. In line with the shift in thinking concerning research methodology in this field that occurred in the 1990s, the use of a broadly qualitative approach was considered most appropriate for this study as it was felt culture could not be understood without reference to subjective meaning.

However, it was the decision to adopt a model of investigation employed by Stoll and Fink (1996)<sup>14</sup> in their research on school culture that made the most significant inroads towards the findings presented in this thesis. By first exploring the cultural norms that determined behaviour in UWCs, it was possible then to peel away layers of consciousness concerning the meanings research participants attributed to daily activities and relationships. As established, this process ultimately revealed the critical core of the movement's culture - its shared beliefs and values – without which a full understanding of learning experiences and their effectiveness was impossible.

### **The implications for further research**

As with most empirical research, it is possible to recommend avenues for further investigation. Some of these avenues build on the findings of this evaluation, others explore areas it was not possible for this study to pursue. Primarily, the full relevance

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<sup>13</sup> Especially since the research of Rutter *et al.* in 1979 as discussed previously in this thesis

<sup>14</sup> Originally proposed by Saphier and King (1985) as acknowledged in Stoll and Fink (1996: 92)

of the evaluation's findings to other schools would benefit further investigation, especially in relation to citizenship learning. It would be valuable to know, for example, how important direct experience of a diversity of national and cultural perspectives is to the development of citizenship learning. Investigation in other school contexts would also establish other examples of effective citizenship education, which, it has been established, are sorely needed.

Further investigation of concepts of citizenship would support initiatives in citizenship education by dismantling the semantic confusion that currently exists. For UWC, investigation of this kind is particularly important if elitist notions of citizenship are to be challenged. UWC might also consider the merits of i) investigating the sub-cultures within the movement to broaden understanding about the influences acting on learning in UWCs and to inform development; ii) examining the legitimacy, consistency and quality of student selection to establish access to UWCs for a broader range of applicants; iii) exploring students' personal convictions and value orientations prior to their UWC education to achieve greater insights into the influence of learning in the colleges<sup>15</sup>; iv) carrying out case studies of Simon Bolivar UWC and the lower schools at SEA and WK to establish the viability of the movement's aims outside the two year IB model; and v) researching the viability and benefit of offering more optional avenues for their graduates' idealism, such as 'third year options' and Network organised projects, in order to support the application of UWC learning experiences in post-college life.

### **Concluding comments**

This thesis drew on the empirical work of an initial and exploratory evaluation of UWC, which was commissioned by the movement itself. It sought to establish what UWCs were achieving and how they were doing so. To this end, the processes of learning, as well as their immediate and longer term impacts were explored. The main findings of the evaluation related to citizenship education and its application in post-college life, which has provided the study with a particular relevance to current initiatives in education in England and in many countries globally. However the writing of this thesis offered the opportunity to analyse the effectiveness of education

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<sup>15</sup> It is not suggested that objective 'before and after' comparisons can be made, but subjective self-evaluation may provide further insights.

in UWCs more fully. In doing so, the movement's culture and its significance for the success of this educational enterprise were revealed. As a consequence, this thesis has brought more light to the relationship between school culture and effective citizenship education; a relationship that has important implications for theory and practice in this area of learning.



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# Appendices

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## Appendix I

### The Philosophy of United World Colleges

1. The aim of the United World Colleges movement is to make education an active force to unite nations and peoples by developing in young people of all backgrounds a lasting commitment to international cooperation and a readiness to promote actively this cause throughout their lives.
2. The means by which we hope to realise this aim is the establishment of a world-wide chain of Colleges and Associated Schools, bringing young people of all nations together at school age and united by a shared commitment to this aim.
3. These Colleges and Schools seek to develop in their students not only their highest intellectual and aesthetic potential, but more moral qualities of courage, compassion, cooperation, perseverance and respect for skill, which are vital to any training in active citizenship and service to the community. As Plato said "He who wishes to help his people must combine the power to think with the will to act".
4. The United World Colleges movement is not a political but an educational venture. We seek not to promote within our colleges any particular ideology or transitory political cause, but so to educate the young that when they have left their college they will be better motivated and better equipped to strive in their own countries for a just, peaceful, and tolerant world.
5. The forms of education through which we believe these aims can best be achieved will vary according to the resources and location of the colleges, but UWC requires all of them to share the following common features:
  - a. A significantly international student body and teaching staff, with entry open to all students and teachers, irrespective of race, nationality, and religion, who accept and support the ideals of the UWC movement;
  - b. Selection of students for entry from the widest possible range of social and cultural backgrounds based on merit alone and irrespective of the family's financial resources;
  - c. A genuinely international academic curriculum oriented towards the development of greater international and cross-cultural understanding;
  - d. A challenging programme of activities and social services based on genuine local needs and including rescue training and rescue services where appropriate;
  - e. Encouragement to students to return to their own countries for higher education wherever possible and to work for the aims of the United World Colleges within their own community.



## **Appendix II**

### **The UWC Mission**

Through international education, shared experience and community service, United World Colleges encourages young people to become responsible citizens, politically and environmentally aware, committed to the ideals of peace, justice, understanding and cooperation, and to the implementation of these ideals through action and personal example.

## Appendix III

UWC Guidelines specified that new colleges must be founded or join the movement on the basis of the following criteria (UWC Guidelines 1983: 11-12):

### **Educational Principles**

Each member of UWC is expected to offer an education founded on the following agreed principles:

- a. it should ordinarily be fully co-educational and pursuing a genuinely international programme and curriculum, with the expressed aim of developing international understanding; where appropriate, the college should offer the International Baccalaureate;
- b. it should have a significantly international student body and, so far as practicable, teaching staff;
- c. entry should be open to all students and teachers, irrespective of race, nationality and religion, who accept and support the ideals of the UWC movement; their acceptance or appointment should be on their merits alone, according to universally applied criteria laid down by the International Board;
- d. the policy of the college should be for students to enter from the widest possible range of social backgrounds and to arrange a substantial scheme of scholarship for which selection is based on merit alone;
- e. there should be an integrated and challenging programme of social and community service based on genuine local needs, including, where relevant, training in life-saving techniques, rescue services and first aid;
- f. it should provide a programme of outdoor activities and adventure which offers students challenges and responsibilities, and which contributes, where relevant, to their training for the service programme;
- g. it should offer a programme of artistic and cultural activities through which students can give expression to their varied traditions and cultures;
- h. a significant core of the student body should be in residential accommodation; where the boarding element remains small, facilities should be available for short residential courses or programmes of non-academic activities;
- i. it should maintain high standards of performance in its fields of education;
- j. it should be financially viable.

## Appendix IV

*A 'graphical representation... of UWC's global working structure'*

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(UWC Review 1996/97: 29)

## Appendix V

### An overview of the structure of the UWC movement

At the time of data collection for this evaluation, the movement's organisational structure was made up of (from left to right of the diagram shown in Appendix IV):

**The Colleges** were nine educational institutions, their staff and students situated across the world. Each had its own Governing Body, which directed college policy, development, fundraising and staff appointments. The Governing Body aimed to be a cross-section of each college's national community. The colleges functioned autonomously within the movement as was appropriate to their own national setting.

**The College Chairs** The Chairs of each of the colleges' Governing Bodies were members of the Executive Board.

**The College Heads' Committee** The Heads of each college met biannually. By rotation one head stood as Chair and represented the Committee on the Executive Board.

**The Network** was an association of all students, graduates and staff of UWCs. The Network operated at several levels - the UWC Network, the National Networks, and the College Networks, but each had common aims and functions. Their official aims were to maintain *'enthusiasm for the ideals inspiring their international education, and to provide encouragement for... the continued pursuit of those ideals'*, and to be an organisation in which *'members can take purposeful action in pursuit of UWC ideals'*. They also maintained basic information on their members, published newsletters, supported the development of UWC and arranged reunions, conferences, and projects<sup>1</sup>.

**International Network Committee** Each college elected a representative from amongst its members. The College Network Representatives chose three of their number to represent them on the International Board. The International Network Committee was made up of Network Members of the International Board and College Network Representatives. Its role was to keep under review all matters relating to the Network of UWC former students and staff<sup>2</sup>.

**The Executive Board** was made up of the Chair of the Executive and International Board, the Chairs of all the UWC Governing Bodies, the Chair of the Network Committee, five Ad Personam members, the two Executive Directors of the International and the International Development Office, and the Chair of College Heads' Committee. The Executive Board had full responsibility for directing the UWC movement worldwide, which included formulating and supervising policy, ensuring UWC's operational viability and financial integrity, supervising its component parts and monitoring compliance with established UWC philosophy and criteria, and the nomination of Executive Board, International Board, and International Council Members and International Council Presidents<sup>3</sup>. Members of the Executive Board were concurrently members of the International Board and met twice a year.

**President of UWC** represented the movement at an international level (Queen Noor)

<sup>1</sup> From UWC Guidelines (1983: 19-20)

<sup>2</sup> From the UWC Guidelines (amended 1984: 8)

<sup>3</sup> From Consultation Paper 'Board terms of Reference' 1996

**International Executive** comprised:

**The International Secretariat** based in AD and responsible for *'academic and external affairs, for international coordination of student selection and National Committee administration, coordination of new college proposals, liaison with outside bodies which represent educational affairs, and all matters related to... the International Board, its committees and the UWC Presidents.'*

**International Development Office** was *'established to mobilise financial support on a global basis'* adding to the work already done by colleges and National Committees<sup>4</sup>.

**Regional Representatives** There were three representatives responsible for Eastern Europe, Malaysia and Indonesia, and Central Latin America respectively.

**International Council** The Council's membership comprised the President (Nelson Mandela), Chairs of the National Committees and representatives from countries where there is no National Committee, the Chairs of the UWC Governing Bodies and college representatives nominated by them, representatives of the International Network, members of the International Board and Vice Presidents. Meetings of the International Council were held at five year intervals and functioned as an opportunity to draw the movement together and *'familiarise'* the Council with the work of the individual colleges. They were intended to *'generate enthusiasm for, and commitment to, the aims of UWC'* and to discuss specific matters of UWC business<sup>5</sup>.

**International Board** The Board's members numbered forty-three, including the Secretary General of the Commonwealth Secretariat, serving and ex-diplomats from various countries, a British MP, an environmentalist and business men and women. The Board had full legal responsibility for the conduct of the affairs of the UWC movement and its role was that of an advisory and review forum for the Executive Board. It met once a year.

**National Committees** The movement was represented by voluntary committees in over 100 countries. They were *'composed largely of independent individuals drawn from a broad cross-section of national life'* and it was expected that representatives of the UWC Graduate Network would be included. Their role was to coordinate the selection of new students for the colleges, to publicise UWC nationally, and to raise scholarship funds. The Committees had the autonomy to pursue these tasks in ways that were *'nationally most appropriate'*<sup>6</sup> in line with guidelines issued by the International Board. Countries with federal structures could form state or provincial committees. In some countries where there was no Committee, government or non-government agencies carried out the selection of new students.

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<sup>4</sup> Information on the International Secretariat and the International Development office is from UWC Review (96/97: 26)

<sup>5</sup> From UWC Guidelines (1983: 9 - 10)

<sup>6</sup> From UWC Guidelines (amended 1984: 17)

## Appendix VI

### UWC International Selection Guidelines, Section B, 1-4 (April 1995)

#### Section B - UWCs that offer the International Baccalaureate

#### 1. Fundamental principles of UWC's scholarship policy

- 1.1 Selection is on merit alone without regard for other factors
- 1.2 Offers should be made to students in the order of merit in which they have come to be placed by the Selection Committee
- 1.3 After selection, some parents may be asked to make contributions to the costs of scholarships, travel and incidentals. However, the possibility of parental contributions must not affect the order of merit
- 1.4 When a contribution is requested the amount should be based on what the candidate's household can afford to pay

#### 2. Points to bear in mind about selection

- 4.9 UWC recognises that no single policy can be applied uniformly throughout the world. Individual Selection Committees decide how the spirit of our policies can be applied in a particular society.
- 4.10 Places, however, must be awarded on the basis of the candidates own potential and not their family background. This means that providing the funding for the scholarship places is a joint responsibility on both the Colleges and the National Committees to ensure the principle of selection on merit is maintained. Contributions from families can be a difficult and sensitive issue. UWC accepts that some student's households and friends make a contribution to their scholarship funding but this should only be discussed with them AFTER the student has been selected on merit. Funds will need to be offered to those students who could not otherwise accept a place.
- 2.3 Because of the particular funding situation in their respective countries, the UWC of the Adriatic (Italy) and Pearson UWC (Canada) cannot accept any contributions from students families for tuition and living costs.
- 2.4 You should confirm directly to the individual Colleges that you accept the place(s) and the scholarship terms they have offered to your Committee. If the College scholarship offer means that your Committee will need to raise some money to pay part of it, you should be reasonably confident you will be able to do that before you accept the College offer. Be very clear in your letter to the College what aspect of the scholarship funding you agree to be responsible for to avoid any future misunderstanding. Estimate early and realistically how much money your Committee will raise to assist students and avoid late changes in the budget.

#### 3. Selection Procedures

Selection needs to be an open and scrupulously fair procedure. Colleges and the general public must have full confidence that UWC does indeed select students on the basis of merit.

##### **The Selection Committee should:**

- 3.1 Advertise scholarships widely
- 3.2 Implement selection criteria carefully, building in provisions for fair treatment of disadvantaged groups
- 4.9 Involve UWC graduates in the selection process as much as possible to take advantage of their detailed knowledge of College life and the UWC movement's aims
- 3.4 Interview short listed candidates thoroughly yet sensitively
- 3.5 Explain the terms of the offers clearly

#### 4. Selection Criteria

- 4.1 **Age 16 or 17 on entry** Candidates should be between 16 and 17 years of age when they start at a College. In special cases (e.g. refugees) students may be slightly older
- 4.2 **Intellectual ability** The International Baccalaureate is a rigorous curriculum. Candidates should be of a high academic potential and recommended by their teachers for university. Students cannot participate fully in College life if they are constantly struggling with their academic work.  
Nominees should be selected for their **potential** as much as for their achievements. This is because relative achievement is often determined by a candidate's opportunities. For instance, in a country where one group's educational opportunities have been greatly inferior, the Committee might wish to ensure that applications from such groups are solicited actively and that the applicant's abilities and potential are assessed in the full awareness of their limited opportunities up to that point. Selection should not be for academic potential alone. Among the candidates you feel will handle the range of academic work well, consider the factors below.
- 4.3 **Interests and Focus** Good UWC students will have both a range of interests and the ability to focus on a special area.
- 4.4 **Commitment to UWC aims** Candidates should be able to show they understand UWC's aims. This could be assessed either in discussion with them during the interview or by the type of activities they have been involved in.
- 4.5 **Personality** Good candidates appear to be tolerant and adaptable individuals with integrity and strength of character. Their sense of their own abilities should be balanced with the willingness to cooperate with others.
- 4.6 **Good mental and physical health** Students will need to be temperamentally stable and in good mental and physical health. Candidates with disabilities which will not deteriorate while at UWC should be **encouraged** to apply.
- 4.9 **International experience not needed** Previous international experience is **not** necessary.
- 4.8 **English is not an entry requirement** Students with little or no English are **welcome** if they possess all the other qualities sought by UWC. What are essential are the linguistic ability and the motivation to learn what is the teaching language in all UWC Colleges that offer the IB. Extra help is usually offered by the Colleges to such students.
- 4.9 **Prepared for a two-year absence** Candidates should be aware of the fact that the IB Diploma course is a two year programme and accept that commitment. Students need to have a good degree of social maturity to live in the residential environment of the Colleges.

## Appendix VII

### **The aims of the IBO's academic educational programmes**

'Education for Life' (IBO 1996a: 1)

The organisation's academic programmes aim to awaken the intelligence of young people and teach them to relate the content of the classroom to the realities of the world outside. Comprehensive and balanced curricula coupled with challenging assessments have established the IBO as a unique institution in the arena of international education. Beyond intellectual rigour and high academic standards, strong emphasis is placed on the ideals of international understanding and responsible citizenship. The desired profile of the IB student is that of a critical and compassionate thinker, an informed participant in local and world affairs who values the shared humanity that binds all people together while respecting the variety of cultures and attitudes that makes for the richness of life.



## Appendix VIII

### **The Aims of a CAS Programme**

‘IB Creativity, Action, Service’ (IBO February 1996: 4-5)

CAS programmes are designed:

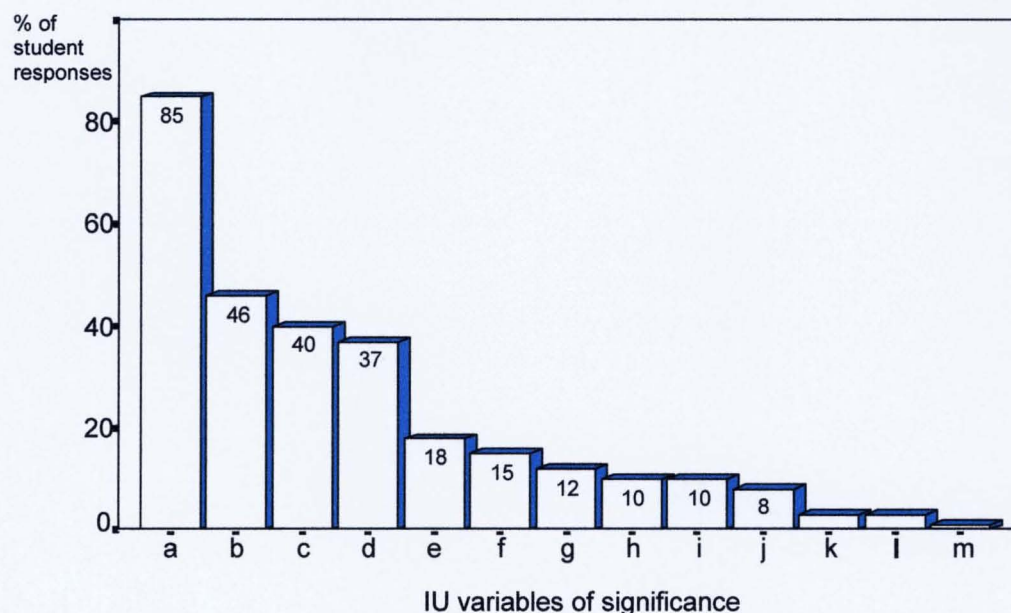
- to provide a challenge to each student in the three areas - Creativity, Action, Service
- to provide opportunities for service  
(Note: for IB students service may extend beyond the local community to include the environment or the international community. Service to the school community could also be appropriate.)
- to complement the academic disciplines of the curriculum and to provide balance to the demands of scholarship placed upon the IB student
- to challenge and extend the individual by developing a spirit of discovery, self-reliance and responsibility
- to encourage the development of the student’s individual skills and interests.

## Appendix IX

### Graphical representations of questionnaire data concerning the significance of international understanding and tolerance (Q. Items D1 and D3)

Table VIII

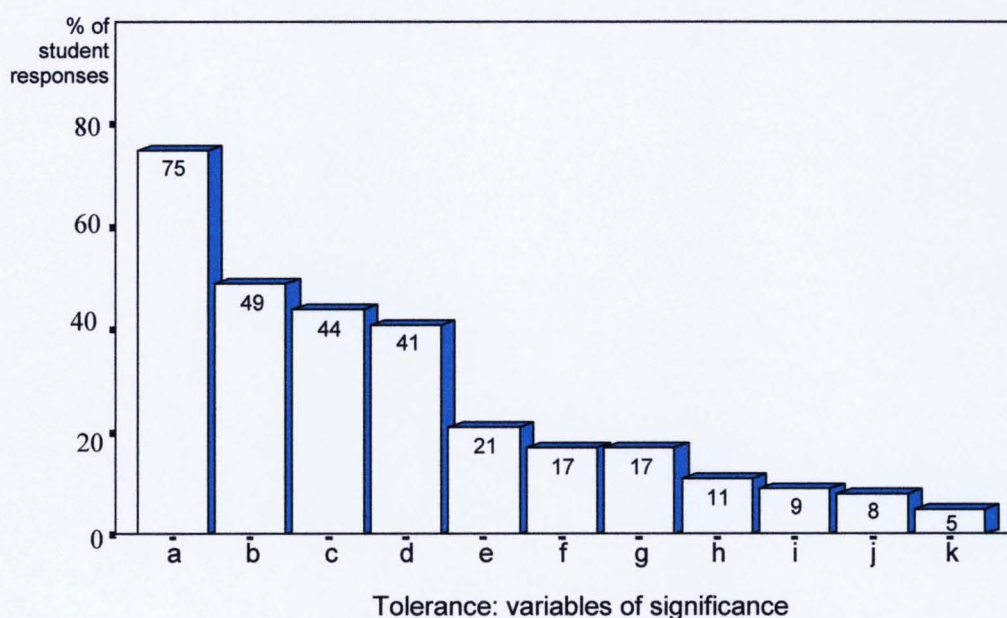
The percentage of student questionnaire responses to thirteen items representing 'international understanding' [IU] (Q. Item D1) N = 549



- a = respecting differences
- b = gathering information about others' traditions, habits and beliefs
- c = understanding differences
- d = supporting equality and human rights
- e = recognising common ground or similarities
- f = trying to avoid offence to others
- g = acknowledging differences
- h = correcting misunderstandings
- i = maintaining a knowledge of world current affairs
- j = recognising incompatibility
- k = overlooking differences
- l = keeping up a facade or pretence
- m = nothing, international understanding is not part of my experience

**Note:** Students were asked to 'tick three items or less' which best described what *international understanding* 'most commonly involves' for them. 99% of the students who returned questionnaires ticked at least two items and 93% ticked three items. The figures displayed here represent percentages of the number of students who filled in this question (N = 549). The item 'other' offered on the questionnaire received a 3% response rate and is not included in the graphical representation. Students who ticked this item added the words 'loving', 'empathising', and 'socialising'.

**Table IX**  
**The percentage of student questionnaire responses to**  
**eleven items representing 'tolerance'**  
**(Q. Item D3) N = 548**



- a = respecting
- b = understanding
- c = accepting
- d = adapting
- e = subduing yourself
- f = forgiving
- g = enduring
- h = complying
- i = avoiding
- j = ignoring
- k = forgetting

**Note:** Students were asked to 'tick three items or less' which best described what *tolerance* 'most commonly involves' for them. 99% of the students who returned questionnaires ticked one item, 98% ticked two items and 85% ticked three items. The figures displayed here represent percentages of the number of students who filled in this question (N = 548). The item 'other' offered on the questionnaire received a 4% response rate and is not included in the graphical representation. Students who ticked this item added the words '*learning*', '*communicating*', and '*disagreeing amicably*'.

## Appendix X

### The Research Sample

#### 1 The Current Student Interview, Journal and Questionnaire Samples

- 1a Student figures for each method of data collection and each UWC
- 1b The characteristics of the student interview and journal samples
- 1c The characteristics of the Current Student Questionnaire sample

#### 2 The Graduate Interview Sample

- 2a Graduating year and college of graduate interviewees
- 2b Nationality and country of residence of graduate interviewees
- 2c Occupation of graduate interviewees

#### 3 The Teacher Interview Sample

#### Additional Official Interviews:

- Heads/Acting Heads of each UWC involved
- WK former Head of College
- Seven UWC National Selection Committee representatives

#### Informal Recorded Discussions:

- The Chairman of the UWC International Board
- The former Director General of UWC
- AW Resident Counsellor
- WK member of the Board of Governors

# 1 The Current Student Interview, Journal and Questionnaire Samples

## Student Profile

**Interviews** With the exception of PC and RCN, in each college ten students were requested to attend individual interviews ('Exploratory' and 'Focused') and ten students were requested to attend group interviews (groups of 5 first year students and 5 second year students independently). As the researcher was asked to visit PC outside its academic year, no interviews were conducted with its current students.

**Journals and questionnaires** With the exception of RCN, in each college ten students were requested to complete research journals and eighty students were requested to complete questionnaires.

In RCN student figures were halved for each method of data collection as the college only had one cohort of students in 1995.

All figures included in tables 1a, 1b and 1c represent those students who attended interviews and returned journals and questionnaires. Attendance and return rates were very high overall:

Individual interviews: 100% attendance

Group interviews: 92% attendance

Journals: 84% return

Questionnaires: 92% return

**1a. Student figures for each method of data collection and each UWC**

	AC	AD	AW	LPC	PC	RCN	SEA	WK	Total
Individual Interviews	10	10	10	10	-	5	10	10	65
Group Interview	10	10	8	9	-	5	9	9	60
Journal	8	8	8	10	6	5	9	9	63
Questionnaire	80	77	74	76	74	39	74	57	551
<b>Total</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>739</b>



**1b. The characteristics of the student interview and journal samples**

	<i>All interviewees</i> Total: 125	<i>Journal writers</i> Total: 63
<b>Nationalities</b>		
African	18	10
Asian	28	13
Australasian	6	3
Central/Latin American	9	5
Eastern/Central European	6	4
North American	16	8
Middle Eastern	3	3
North African	4	2
Western European	35	15
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	61	28
Female	64	35
<b>Residency</b>		
Boarder	114	58
Day student	11	5
<b>College year</b>		
First year	65	33
Second year	60	30
<b>Funding status</b>		
Full/partial scholarship	102	51
Full fee-payer	23	12

**1c. The characteristics of the Current Student Questionnaire sample**

<b>Sampling Criteria</b>	<b>UWC population<sup>7</sup> N = 1783</b>	<b>Questionnaire Sample N = 600</b>	<b>Questionnaire Returns N = 551</b>
Female	977	327	306
Male	806	273	245
First Year	952	321	299
Second Year	831	279	252
Boarder	1514	533	491
Day Student	269	67	60
Full/Partial Scholarship	1285	456	437
Fee-Paying	498	144	114
African	192	76	69
Asian	429	138	119
Australasian	48	11	10
Caribbean/ Latin American	126	43	43
Eastern/ Central European	149	53	50
North American	174	63	63
Middle Eastern	45	14	13
North African	2	1	1
Western European	618	201	183

<sup>7</sup> Figures include all students in two year IB colleges and IB students of SEA and WK at March 1996

## 2 The Graduate Interview Sample

### Graduate Profile

Fifty-four graduates were interviewed individually and an additional six took part in a Group Interview. During the period of data collection there were no graduates of RCN.

Twenty-nine of the graduate interviewees were female and thirty-one were male. As UWC students, fifty-three graduate interviewees were boarders and seven were day students; forty-four were awardees of full or partial scholarships and sixteen were full fee-payers.

Nine of the graduates interviewed individually were attending a reunion at Pearson College. As it was requested that the researcher attend the Pearson Reunion, graduate numbers involved in this research are skewed slightly towards proportionally higher numbers of PC graduates from the reunion's graduating years. However there was no evidence that this had unduly biased graduate research data.

### 2a. Graduating year and college of graduate interviewees

		College							
		AC	SEA	PC	WK	AD	AH	LPC	Total
Graduating Year	1960-65	1							1
	1966-70	2			1**				3
	1971-75	1	1	1*					3
	1976-80	1	2	8					11
	1981-85	1		1	2	1	2		7
	1986-90	2	2	5	2	3	1		15
	1991-95	1	2	3	2	4	3	5	20
	Total	9	7	18	7	8	6	5	60

\* = Interviewee attending PC Reunion in 1995. As a student he left PC in 1975 after one year due to personal circumstances.

\*\* = Interviewee graduated from WK before it became associated with UWC, but is a member of the UWC Graduate Network in his locality.



**2b. Graduate interviewees' nationalities and countries of residence during data collection**

World Region	Nationality	Country of Residence
Africa	6	4
Asia	11	9
Australasia	2	1
Caribbean and Latin America	3	2
Eastern and Central Europe	2	1
North America	18	22
Middle East	1	1
North Africa	1	-
Western Europe	16	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>60</b>

**2c Occupation of graduate interviewees<sup>8</sup>**

<b>Student</b>	<b>19</b>	○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○
<b>Community/Social</b>	<b>13</b>	○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○
<b>Business Service</b>	<b>9</b>	○○○○○○○○○○○○○○
<b>Manufacturing</b>	<b>5</b>	○○○○○○
<b>Arts/Recreation</b>	<b>4</b>	○○○○○
<b>Sales/Catering</b>	<b>3</b>	○○○
<b>House Parent</b>	<b>3</b>	○○○
<b>Construction/Transport</b>	<b>2</b>	○○
<b>Utilities</b>	<b>2</b>	○○
<b>Agriculture/Mining</b>	<b>0</b>	

<sup>8</sup> Interviewees' occupations have been classified on the basis of categories used in the UWC Survey 1992. 'Student' and 'House Parent' were added for the classification of this research sample

### 3 The Teacher Interview Sample

5 teachers were interviewed in each college involved in the research (excluding PC)

<i>All interviewees</i> Total: 35	
<b>Nationalities</b>	
African	2
Asian	5
Australasian	3
Central/Latin American	2
Eastern/Central European	1
North American	6
Middle Eastern	-
North African	-
Western European	16
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	21
Female	14
<b>Residency</b>	
Resident on campus <sup>9</sup>	29
Resident off campus	6
<b>Area of academic specialisation<sup>10</sup></b>	
Arts (including ToK)	19
Sciences	15
<b>Total years of teaching experience in UWCs</b>	
1 - 5	19
6 - 10	11
11 - 15	5

**The above figures include:**

Graduates of UWCs	3
Teachers previously employed in another UWC	3
Newly qualified teachers	4
Teachers in their first year in a UWC	7

<sup>9</sup> This category includes i) AD teachers resident in the village of Duino and ii) teachers with specific residency responsibilities (18)

<sup>10</sup> In addition to these figures, there was one teacher interviewee responsible solely for CAS and PSE (no academic teaching responsibilities). Other CAS Coordinators interviewed are included in the figures for Arts and Sciences

**Appendix XI**

<b>Research Instruments</b>
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Exploratory Interview Schedule for Current Students (1a)  
Focused Interview Schedule for Current Students (1b)

Exploratory Interview Schedule for Graduates (2a)  
Focused Interview Schedule for Graduates (2b)

Interview Schedule for Heads of Colleges (3)  
Interview Schedule for Teachers (4)

Interview Schedule for National Selection Committee Members (5)

Visual Representation Sheet for Current Student Group Interviews (6)

A sample page from the Current Student Journal (7)

Current Student Questionnaire (8)

1a

## Exploratory Interview Schedule for Current Students

**Profile:**

**College**

**IB year**

**Nationality**

**Day student/Boarder**

**Service group/s**

**IB subjects**

**Scholarship/No scholarship**

**Can you tell me a little about...**

**why you chose to apply to a UWC? Why this UWC?**

**the process by which you were selected for a place at this UWC?**

**your memories of your first few weeks here?**

(Have your first impressions/feelings changed?)

**the things you like/dislike about studying/living here?**

(how is it different to your previous educational experiences/post-16 education in your own country?)

**the things you have learnt and any ways you have changed since coming here?**

**your plans when you leave this UWC?**

(What will/has influenced your decisions?)

**Closing activity:**

**look at UWC Mission Statement and comment on how it relates to your experience in your college?**

**1b**

## **Focused Interview Schedule for Current Students**

Supplemented with questions for clarification and elaboration on  
responses to Exploratory Interview Schedule

**Reflecting on our first interview is there anything else you would like to say about your college experiences and their influence upon you?**

### **Expectations**

**What do you think UWC expects of you...**

- 1. now**
- 2. later in life**

**What do you expect of your UWC and the people here?**

**To sum up:**

**How would you explain your UWC experience and its effects upon you to someone who had never heard of UWCs?**

2a

## Exploratory Interview Schedule for Graduates

**Profile:**

<b>College</b> <b>Years attended</b> <b>IB subjects</b> <b>Service group</b> <b>Day student/Boarder</b>	<b>Nationality (then &amp; now)</b> <b>Country of residence</b> <b>Current occupation</b> <b>Scholarship/No scholarship</b>
---	--

**Could you tell me a little about...**

**the route your life has taken since leaving your UWC?**  
 (i.e. study, work - paid and voluntary, travel, interests etc.)

**what you feel you learnt at your UWC?**

**the experience of leaving your UWC and beginning the next stage in your life?**

**whether your UWC learning experience has had a lasting, changing,  
 dwindling or non-existent influence on your life?**

**whether you can see the influence of your UWC experience in your values, the  
 choices you have made in life, and/or your current life style?**

**whether you are critical of any part/s of your UWC experience?**  
**whether its impact/s have proved problematic in any way?**

**why you have/haven't remained involved/in touch with UWC?**

<b>Closing activity:</b>	<b>look at UWC Mission Statement and comment on how it relates          to your experience in your college?</b>
--------------------------	---

**For Reunion Graduates:**

**Why have you come along to this reunion?**

2b

## Focused Interview Schedule for Graduates

Supplemented with questions for clarification and elaboration on  
responses to Exploratory Interview Schedule

**Reflecting on our first interview is there anything else you would like to say about your college experiences and their influence upon you?**

### Expectations

**What do you think UWC expected/expects of you...**

1. then
2. now

**What do you expect of UWC and its graduates?**

**Would you have recommended your UWC experience to anyone?**

**Would you have categorised the students in your year into any groups in terms of the way they dealt with their UWC experience?**

To sum up:

**How would you explain your UWC experience and its effects upon you to someone who had never heard of UWCs?**

## Interview Schedule for Heads of Colleges

**Years as head of (UWC)**  
**Involvement in education prior to this headship**

**Could you tell me a little about...**

**the key responsibilities of your post?**

**the core aims of the college?**

**the extent to which these aims are met?**    (...and factors which influence this?)

**the ethos of this college?**

**what you consider of particular value for students in this UWC experience?**

**anything which is problematic about the experience for students?**

**the influences of college experiences upon students?**

**what elements of this experience have those influences?**

**Mission Statement:**

**What does this mean to you and this college?**

**Do you consider this an appropriate mission for education?**



## Interview Schedule for Teachers

**Profile:**

**Nationality**  
**Number of years at this college**  
**Post/s and role/s in college**  
**Resident on campus?**  
**Any involvement in education prior to this?**

**Can you tell me a little about...**

**why you applied for a post at this UWC?**

**your interview for the post?**  
 (any sense of what they were seeking in a teacher?)

**your initial understanding of what the UWC movement was about?**  
 (Has your understanding changed/developed?)

**your induction?**  
 (formal or informal)

**your role/s here?**

**the things you like/dislike about teaching/living here?**  
 (how does this experience differ from that of any other school/college you have worked in?)

**what you feel the educational experience here influences students?**

**Mission Statement:**      **how does the UWC Mission relate to education in this college?**

## Interview Schedule for National Selection Committee Members

**Profile:**

**Nationality**  
**Which National Committee**  
**Any past involvement with UWC**  
**Current occupation**

**Could you tell me a little about...**

**what your job on this UWC National Committee entails?**

**the step-by-step selection process for prospective students?**

**what you are looking for in a prospective student?**

**what you consider undesirable characteristics in a prospective student?**  
 (many in this category/self-selecting?)

**whether other NC members use the criteria you have mentioned?**

**how decision making occurs amongst committee members?**

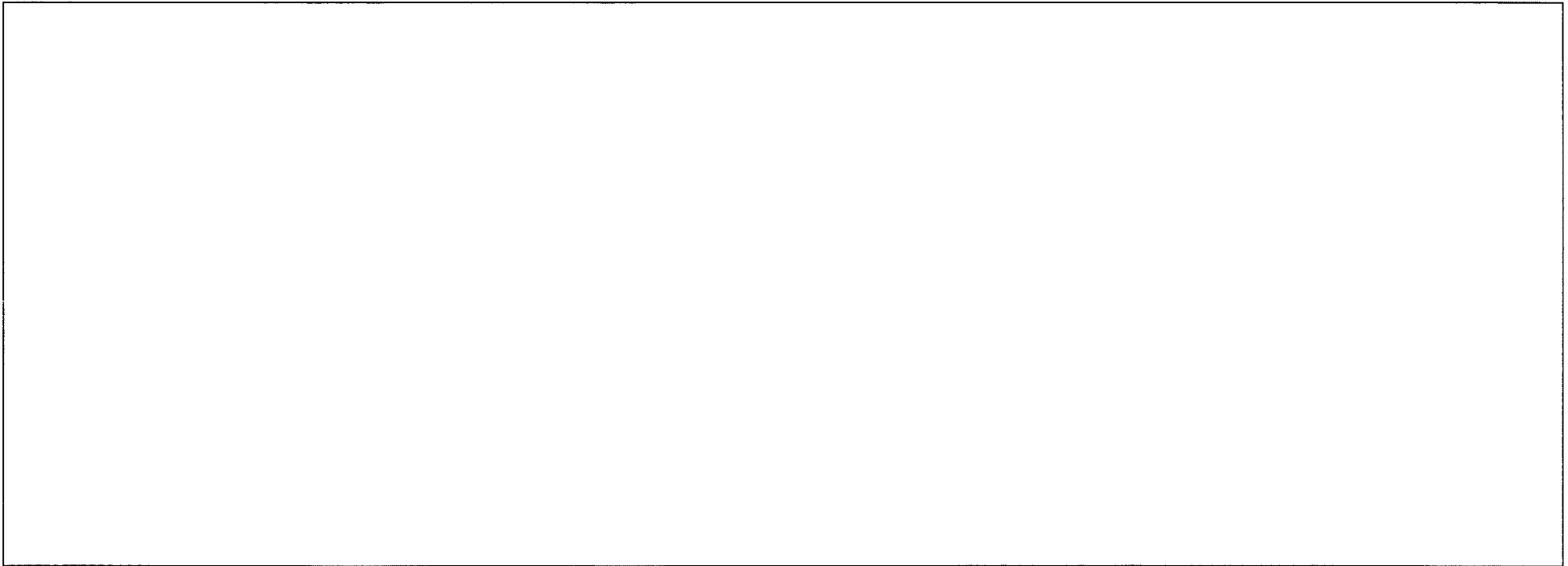
**UWC Selection Criteria Guidelines:**

**how much bearing do these have on your decision making process?**

**what kind of information you offer students about UWCs?**

**A Visual Representation of your College Experience**

Using pictures, labels, statements or icons, please try to visually summarise your college experience to date and its influences upon you.



Year Group:

Sex:

Nationality:

Boarder/Day student

Scholarship/No scholarship

College:

Service Group:

IB subjects:

## A sample page from the Current Student Journal

Entry 4	Date entry made:
---------	------------------

Please describe an incident(s) that has occurred this week in any had/aspect of your life at your college which you can identify as having a particular impact upon you:

Please describe the impact you feel this incident(s) is having upon you:

Confidential &amp; Anonymous

8

# A Survey of Current Students of United World Colleges

Part of a research project conducted for UWC by  
The Institute of Education, University of London  
April 1996

Dear student,

**Your contribution to this project is very important...**

You have been asked to complete this questionnaire because your nationality, sex and college year make an important element in a cross-section sample of students selected from your college. This sample has been chosen carefully to represent the views of students as a whole in your college. Therefore without your contribution, the research risks missing important information about a much larger number of students.

**It will require very little of your time...**

This questionnaire will reach you before life becomes too busy with revision and exams. But given that life can be quite hectic in UWCs at the best of times, the questionnaire has been designed to be very quick and easy to fill in. You can answer every question with a simple tick ✓ (or similar) in a box.

**What we need to know...**

Many of you will already know about this research project and will have met me during the visits I have made to each of the UWCs around the world in the past year. The UWC Organisation has asked the University of London to find out about the impacts of UWC experiences upon UWC students. A project of this scale conducted by professional researchers for UWC has never occurred before. This questionnaire is based entirely on what some of your fellow UWC students, graduates and staff have said. It is the concluding stage in the research and is designed to check most importantly how similar their views are to yours.

**How we will use what you tell us...**

Your views and opinions on your UWC experience and its effect on you are absolutely vital and will play an important part in the development of each UWC college and the student experience.

The information you provide in this questionnaire is entirely confidential and will be used anonymously. For this reason you will find an adhesive label on the last page of this questionnaire. This can be used to seal the edge of your completed questionnaire, which should then be handed to the designated member of staff in your college. This seal will not be cut until it reaches me. You are not asked to write your name on the questionnaire, but it is important that you fill in the section 'Personal Details' so that we can check whether there are any patterns between these and what students say about their experience.

I look forward to receiving your completed questionnaire.  
Your answers will be put to very good use and your help with the research is very much appreciated.

Very best wishes, Jackie Branson, University of London.

## Please read carefully...

- \* Please fill in the questionnaire independently. We are interested in your views. You can be absolutely honest - this is not testing you, but is interested in your UWC experience. There are no right or wrong answers. A negative answer will not reflect badly on your college, it will help it to make improvements.
- \* Please fill in every question completely unless the instructions advise you not to.
- \* Read the questions and instructions very carefully and check any words you do not understand.
- \* Please do not write any comments alongside the answer boxes, unless the instructions ask you to. A space is provided at the end of the questionnaire for any written comments you wish to add.

### Words commonly used in this questionnaire

College	The two years at your UWC (students in WKUWC and SEAUWC should assume all questions and any mention of 'college' refer to the last two IB years of your school <u>only</u> ).
First/Second Year	Your first or second year studying for the IB
Administration	The body of staff who deal with managing and organising your UWC (including your Head/Principal/Rektor/President of College)
Host Family	The family in the local community that you spend time with outside college activities (not all students will have been assigned a Host Family)
Academics	Your studies relating to the compulsory subjects of the IB, <u>excluding</u> services and activities
Services & Activities	The non-academic part of your IB (may be called 'Challenge' or 'CAS' in your college)

## Section A: Personal Details

The following information will be used to consider any patterns that arise between what you and other students have to say in response to this questionnaire. All data is confidential to the research team - students will not be identified at any point in this research process.

Please tick ✓ one box

Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
------	--------------------------	--------	--------------------------

Please tick ✓ one box

First year IB	<input type="checkbox"/>	Second year IB	<input type="checkbox"/>
---------------	--------------------------	----------------	--------------------------

Please tick ✓ one box

Boarder (i.e. resident on campus)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Day student (i.e. not resident on campus)	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------------------	--------------------------	--	--------------------------

Please write in space

Nationality	<input type="text"/>
-------------	----------------------

Please tick ✓ one box

No scholarship	<input type="checkbox"/>	Part scholarship	<input type="checkbox"/>	Full scholarship	<input type="checkbox"/>
----------------	--------------------------	------------------	--------------------------	------------------	--------------------------

Please write below each heading

Higher IB subjects	Subsidiary IB subjects	Service/s now	Activities now
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>



## Section D: International Understanding and Tolerance

Please read the entire list, then tick 3 items or less which complete the following statement best for you.

(D1) 'International understanding' in my UWC experience most commonly involves...

Tick 3 only

maintaining a knowledge of world current affairs	
trying to avoid offence to others	
keeping up a facade or pretence (i.e. putting on an act or pretending)	
overlooking differences	
acknowledging differences	
respecting differences	
understanding differences	
recognising common ground or similarities	
nothing, international understanding is <u>not</u> part of my experience	
supporting equality and human rights	
correcting misunderstandings	
gathering information about others' traditions, habits and beliefs	
recognising incompatibility (i.e. where cannot overcome differences)	
Other, please write here and include as one of the three ticks....	

(D2)

Please indicate how much the following parts of UWC life have increased your international understanding.

Please tick in the most appropriate column for each item.

	International Understanding			
	Increased a lot	Increased a little	No increase	Not part of my experience
Academic learning or class discussions				
National or cultural events or similar				
Organised debates or discussions				
Observing other cultures or nationalities				
Camps, expeditions or project weeks				
Host Family				
Service and activities				
Dorm/House/Residence life on campus				
Team work or team sports				
Material resources in college (e.g. books, videos)				

Please remember this questionnaire is not testing you.  
We are interested in your UWC experience.



Please read the entire list, then tick 3 items or less which complete the following statement best for you.

(D3) 'Tolerance' in my UWC experience most commonly involves...

Tick 3 only	
Enduring (i.e. suffering something or someone you don't like)	
Accepting	
Ignoring	
Avoiding	
Subduing yourself (i.e. hiding your feelings or identity to some degree)	
Understanding	
Adapting (i.e. changing yourself to make a situation easier)	
Complying (i.e. going along with others' wishes, traditions etc.)	
Forgetting	
Forgiving	
Respecting	
Other, please write here and include as one of three ticks...	

(D4) Please indicate how much the following parts of UWC life have increased your ability to be tolerant.

Please tick in the most appropriate column for each item.

	Ability to be tolerant			
	Increased a lot	Increased a little	No increase	Not part of my experience
Academic learning or class discussions				
National or cultural events or similar				
Organised debates or discussions				
Observing other cultures or nationalities				
Camps, expeditions or project weeks				
Host Family				
Service and activities				
Dorm/House/Residence life on campus				
Team work or team sports				
Material resources in college (e.g. books, videos)				

Don't forget there is a space on the last page to write any elaboration on answers or on your UWC experience generally

## Section E: Your Relationships with Home and College

Please tick a point on each row below which best indicates how you currently think of the following people

(E1)

### The friends you made before UWC

Tick on the appropriate lines

Interesting	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
No fun	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Active	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Immature	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Adventurous	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Intelligent	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Open minded	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Selfish	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Trustworthy	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Not aggressive	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Superficial	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Uninteresting  
Fun  
Passive  
Mature  
Unadventurous  
Unintelligent  
Closed minded  
Unselfish  
Untrustworthy  
Aggressive  
Deep

(E2)

### The friends you have made in UWC

Tick on the appropriate lines

Interesting	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
No fun	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Active	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Immature	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Adventurous	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Intelligent	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Open minded	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Selfish	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Trustworthy	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Unaggressive	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Superficial	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Uninteresting  
Fun  
Passive  
Mature  
Unadventurous  
Unintelligent  
Closed minded  
Unselfish  
Untrustworthy  
Aggressive  
Deep

(E3)

Please complete the following statements:

a) *Since coming to UWC my thinking about the friends I made before is...*

Please tick one box only

<i>more positive</i>	<i>same</i>	<i>less positive</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

b) *Since coming to UWC my thinking about my family is...*

Please tick one box only

<i>more positive</i>	<i>same</i>	<i>less positive</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

c) *Since coming to UWC my thinking about my country is...*

Please tick one box only

<i>more positive</i>	<i>same</i>	<i>less positive</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Section F: Responsibility

(F1) Has your sense of responsibility changed towards the following as a result of your college experience?

Please put a tick in the appropriate column for each item

	Sense of responsibility				
	Increased a lot	Increased a little	No change	Decreased a little	Decreased a lot
Your sense of responsibility for yourself					
Your sense of responsibility towards your family					
Your sense of responsibility towards your friends generally					
Your sense of responsibility towards community					
Your sense of responsibility towards your country					
Your sense of responsibility globally					

(F2) How much responsibility do you feel you have in the following aspects of college life?

Please put a tick in the appropriate column for each item

	Amount of responsibility			
	Too much	Enough	Too little	None
Services				
Activities				
Relations between sexes				
Time management				
Decision making in your residence on campus (Put a cross X in each box if you are not resident on campus)				
Whole college decision making				
Your own emotional welfare				
Fellow students' emotional welfare				
Academic learning				

## Section G: Time for Reflection

(G1) How much time do you spend reflecting on your UWC experience generally?

Please tick one box only

Too much time		Enough time		Too little time		No time	
---------------	--	-------------	--	-----------------	--	---------	--

(G2) How important is time for reflection on your UWC experience to you?

Please tick one box only

Of great importance		Important		Of little importance		Not important	
---------------------	--	-----------	--	----------------------	--	---------------	--

## Section H: Your English

Please complete this section if you were not fluent in English when you first arrived at your UWC.

If you were fluent in English when you arrived at your UWC, miss this section and go on to Section I below.

(H1) In your first few weeks at this college, how did your level of English effect the following?

Please tick the appropriate column for each item

Problem in first few weeks?

	Many problems	A few problems	No problems
Settling into your residence (Please leave blank if you were not resident on campus)			
Communication with staff			
Communication with students			
Choice of academic subjects			
Choice of services and activities			
Awareness and understanding of UWC ideals and spirit			
Awareness and understanding of college rules and procedures			

(H2) Please indicate whether your abilities in English make the following problematic for you now.

Please tick the appropriate column for each item

Problem now?

	Many problems now	A few problems now	No problems now
Residence life (Please leave blank if you are not resident on campus)			
Communication with staff			
Communication with students			
Progress in academic subjects			
Involvement in services and activities			
Relations with your host family (Please leave blank if you do not have a host family)			
Speaking to large meetings			
Speaking to small meetings			
Understanding and involvement with UWC ideals and spirit			
Understanding and following college rules and procedures			

## Section I: After UWC

Which of the following statements best describes your current feelings about living in your own country in the future?

Tick one

I am currently in my country and want to remain here after I leave this college	
I want to live in my country immediately after I leave this college	
I want to live in my country immediately after completing further study abroad	
I want to live in my country sometime in the future, but I'm not sure when.	
I do not want to live in my country anymore	
I must live in my own country, whether I want to or not. (e.g. for national/military service)	
It would be impossible to live in my country, whether I want to or not.	

## Section J: College Cliques

(i.e. fixed and exclusive groups of students)

(J1) What do you feel are the most significant reasons for cliques or segregation amongst students in your college?

Please read the entire list, then tick 3 items or less which are most significant reasons in your opinion.

Tick 3 only			
Language			
Nationality			
Personal interests/hobbies			
Race			
Cultural/religious beliefs			
Academic subject choices			
Service/activity choices		For SEAUWC & WKUWC ONLY	Tick
Social habits		Boarding or not	
Dorms/residences		UWC scholars or not	
Other, please write here and include in numbered items ...			

(i.e. slow down or stop)

(J2) How much do you feel cliques hinder the development of international understanding amongst students?

Tick one			
Cliques hinder international understanding?			
Hinder a lot	Hinder	Hinder a little	Do not hinder at all

## Section K: The General Impact of your UWC Experience

(K1) How important are the following to you?

Please put a tick in the appropriate column for each item

	How important to you?			
	Of great importance	Important	Of little importance	Not important
A good academic education or qualification				
International understanding				
Tolerance towards others				
Your social life				
Awareness of your own country, culture and race				
Environmental awareness				
Political awareness				
Awareness of humanitarian issues (e.g. peace, justice, equality)				
Acting on your ideals				
Access to good universities				
Knowledge of world current affairs				

(K2) How much do you feel you have changed as a result of your UWC experiences?

a) Your awareness of your own country culture and race

Increased a lot	Increased a little	No change	Decreased a little	Decreased a lot
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If there has been a change, please write below the aspects of your UWC experience which have most influenced that change...

b) Your environmental awareness

Increased a lot	Increased a little	No change	Decreased a little	Decreased a lot
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If there has been a change, please write below the aspects of your UWC experience which have most influenced that change...

c) Your political awareness

Increased a lot	Increased a little	No change	Decreased a little	Decreased a lot
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If there has been a change, please write below the aspects of your UWC experience which have most influenced that change...

d) Your awareness of world current affairs

Increased a lot	Increased a little	No change	Decreased a little	Decreased a lot
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If there has been a change, please write below the aspects of your UWC experience which have most influenced that change...

e) Your awareness of humanitarian issues (e.g. peace, justice, equality)

Increased a lot	Increased a little	No change	Decreased a little	Decreased a lot
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If there has been a change, please write below the aspects of your UWC experience which have most influenced that change...

f) Your willingness to question traditions, conventions or knowledge

Increased a lot	Increased a little	No change	Decreased a little	Decreased a lot
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If there has been a change, please write below the aspects of your UWC experience which have most influenced that change...

**(K3) How do you feel you respond to the following issues currently?**

Active = any response which is intended to have an impact on a particular situation.

Passive = any response which is not intended to have an impact on a particular situation.

Please put a tick in the appropriate column for each item

	Your response is...?		
	More <u>active</u> than passive	More <u>passive</u> than active	No feeling/ awareness on this issue
Humanitarian issues (e.g. peace, justice, equality)			
Environmental issues			
Political issues			
International relations			
Ethnic/race relations			

## Section L: Expectations of You

Please answer both a) and b)

**a) Whose expectations have most influence over you?**

Please read the entire list, then tick one only

	Tick one only
Your National/Selection Committee	
Your parent/s	
Others in your home life	
The UWC Organisation	
Your college administration	
Your fellow students	
Yourself	
Staff involved with your academics	
Staff involved with your service/activities	
Residence staff	
Your Host Family or local community	
Your future place of study/ work	
Other, please write here and tick...	

**b) What are these expectations related to most?**

Please read the entire list, then tick 1 item only

	Tick one only
Your academics	
Your services/activities	
Your assertiveness	
Your sociability (i.e. how you interact socially)	
Your international understanding	
Your environmental awareness	
Your political awareness	
Your awareness of humanitarian issues (e.g. peace, justice, equality)	
Your national/cultural/ethnic identity	
Your physical activity/stamina	
Your happiness	
Your fluency in English	
Other, please write here and include in numbered items...	

**This questionnaire is confidential to yourself and the research team.  
The information you provide will be used anonymously.**

**(L2) What do you think UWC would like you to do in your life after this college?**

Please read all of the UWC student statements below, then tick one which is most similar to what you think

	Tick one only
I am not aware of anything UWC would like me to do when I leave here'	
I think UWC would like me to go out and enjoy life in any way I choose'	
I think UWC would like me to get into university and that's it'	
I think UWC would like me to give something back eventually, perhaps by giving some money for scholarships'	
I think UWC would like me to live by the ideals promoted here in small everyday ways'	
I think UWC would like me to tell other people about UWCs and their ideals'	
I think UWC would like me to have some major impact to make the world a better place'	
Other, please write here and tick box....	

## Section M : The International Baccalaureate plus...

**(M1) How has the IB's academics effected you?**

If you are studying for the IB Certificate and not the full IB Diploma, please cross X any group in which you do not do subjects

Please tick ✓ any appropriate columns for each item, leave boxes empty where there has been no effect on you.

### Increased as result of IB academics?

	International Understanding	Environmental Awareness	Political Awareness	Humanitarian Awareness e.g. peace, justice	Critical Thinking	Awareness of own nat., cult., & race
1. Language A1						
2. Language A2, B, ab initio						
<b>Where there is a list, underline or write the subject/s you do.</b>						
3. <b>Individuals and Societies</b> i.e. History, Geography, Economics, Philosophy, Psychology, Soc. Anthropol, Business & Org., Info. Tech.						
4. <b>Experimental Sciences</b> i.e. Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Env. Systems, Design Tech.						
5. <b>Mathematics</b>						
<b>Put a cross X in each of the boxes below if you do not do a subject from Group 6</b>						
6. <b>The Arts &amp; Electives</b> Art/Design, Music, Theatre Arts, Classical Greek, Latin, Computer Science, Peace & Conflict Studies, Chinese Studies, Political Theory, World Religion, Nutritional Sciences						
7. <b>Theory of Knowledge</b>						
8. <b>Extended Essay</b>						



(M2) The following are special programmes run by some UWCs, please write each one that you have experienced in a shaded box on the left and then tick in the appropriate columns to show how it has effected you.

'Global Concerns'	'Conflict Resolution' or 'Peace and Conflict'	'International and Cultural Affairs'	'Forum' (Specify if on one particular subject)	'Model UN'	'UWC Awareness'
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Increased as result of special programmes in your UWC?

	International Understanding	Environmental Awareness	Political Awareness	Humanitarian Awareness	Critical Thinking	Awareness of own nat., cult., & race
Write programme below						

i.e. 'Services & Activities', 'CAS', or 'Challenges'

(M3) What do the different parts of the non-academic IB programme mean to you?

Please read each list, then tick one item most important to you for each part of the programme.

**a) ACTIVITIES**

Tick one

Doing the hours required for my IB	
Challenging myself	
Keeping fit	
Learning new skills	
Helping the needy	
Getting off campus	
A break from academics	
Developing relationships outside UWC	
Developing relationships with UWC people	
A contribution to the community (college or local)	
Other, please write here and tick...	

**b) SERVICE** (i.e. work for/with the local or college community)

Tick one

Doing the hours required for my IB	
Challenging myself	
Keeping fit	
Learning new skills	
Helping the needy	
Getting off campus	
A break from academics	
Developing relationships outside UWC	
Developing relationships with UWC people	
A contribution to the community (college or local)	
Other, please write here and tick...	

(M4) How satisfactorily are the following subjects addressed in your college?

	Very well addressed	Satisfactorily addressed	Poorly addressed	Not addressed at all	No need to address, doesn't exist
Racism in college					
Racism in the world generally					
Sexism in college					
Sexism in the world generally					
UWC student sexuality i.e. the issue of sexual preference					
Human sexuality generally i.e. the issue of sexual preference					

Please check you have not missed any part of any question  
and then  
seal your questionnaire\* with the adhesive label provided and return it to  
the designated member of staff in your college.

\* You can either just seal the longest edge of your questionnaire or you can fold it in half lengthways and seal the two long edges.

Many thanks for the time and effort you have given in completing this questionnaire.  
Your views are essential to this research.

This space is for any elaboration on answers you wish to give or other comments related to  
your UWC experience...

